

AUTUMN, 1954

# RELIGION IN LIFE

Reg. U. S. Pat. Off.

*A Christian Quarterly*  
OF OPINION AND DISCUSSION

## CONTENTS

### The Minister's Reading

NEIL GREGOR SMITH, WINFRED E. GARRISON, ERNEST H. JEFFE,  
GILBERT T. ROWE, MILES H. KRUMBINE

"Compel Them to Come In".....	FREDERICK A. NORWOOD
Character Education à la Mode.....	ROBERT A. FITCH
Professor Brightman's Theory of the Given.....	ROLAND STAHL
Fact, Fiction and Faith.....	FREDERIC A. CROWNFIELD
What Is Liberalism?.....	HENRY E. KOLBE
Thomas Jefferson's "Fair Experiment"—Religious Freedom.....	SIDNEY E. MEAD
Sectarianism and the Psychoses.....	SAMUEL SOUTHARD
John Wesley and Baptismal Regeneration.....	PAUL S. SANDERS
Ministering to American Families Overseas.....	ROBBINS W. BARTLOW
Book Reviews	
Book Notices	
Index for Volume XXIII	

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# RELIGION IN LIFE

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## CONTENTS

<b>The Minister's Reading</b> . . . . .	483
NEIL GREGOR SMITH, WINFRED E. GARRISON, ERNEST H. JEFFS, GILBERT T. ROWE, MILES H. KRUMBINE	
"Compel Them to Come In" . . . . .	FREDERICK A. NORWOOD 516
Character Education à la Mode . . . . .	ROBERT E. FITCH 528
Professor Brightman's Theory of the Given . . . . .	ROLAND STAHL 537
Fact, Fiction and Faith . . . . .	FREDERIC R. CROWNFIELD 549
What Is Liberalism? . . . . .	HENRY E. KOLBE 556
Thomas Jefferson's "Fair Experiment"—Religious Freedom . . . . .	SIDNEY E. MEAD 566
Sectarianism and the Psychoses . . . . .	SAMUEL SOUTHARD 580
John Wesley and Baptismal Regeneration . . . . .	PAUL S. SANDERS 591
Ministering to American Families Overseas . . . . .	ROBBINS W. BARSTOW 604
Book Reviews . . . . .	612
Book Notices . . . . .	635
Index for Volume XXIII . . . . .	638

## "To Save Rather Than to Satisfy"

RALPH SOCKMAN

ONE of the most popular perversions of Christianity is the presentation of God as a caterer to man-made wants and religious faith as a way of fulfilling human desires. The contemporary pulpit in its effort to draw crowds stresses the satisfactions to be derived from religion—peace of mind, health of body, social acceptability, freedom from tension, financial prosperity, even military success. Preachers try to "sell religion" on the principle of "the public be pleased." They preach to men's desires rather than to their needs. They portray God as a sort of divine Santa Claus coming down to fill our stockings with whatever we may ask in his name.

All this some preachers do because they know that people would rather feel good than be good. But they forget that God in Christ came to save rather than to satisfy. Our willful and misguided world needs a Master, not an ally. Health, peace, and other blessings do come as by-products of Christianity, but only to those who lose themselves in serving the Lord.

—From the exposition of I Kings, *The Interpreter's Bible*, Vol. III, pp. 27f.  
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## The Minister's Reading

From NEIL GREGOR SMITH

THERE HAS BEEN a long and honorable association between the Christian ministry and the world of books. Paul of Tarsus was far from being a bookish recluse, but when he was urging Timothy to come to him before winter and bring the cloak that had been left at Troas with Carpus, he asked him to bring with him also "the books, and especially the parchments." The request is evidence that he appreciated, in his own active and fruitful ministry, the place of the ministry of books.

In the Rule of St. Benedict, by which monastic life was guided for many centuries, it was provided that the brethren should spend a certain portion of each day in reading. Seniors of the monastery were required to make the rounds during the reading period to ensure that rude fellows of the baser sort did not misuse the reading period in sleeping or idle jesting. Nearly every monastery had its library in which books were carefully preserved, and due precautions were taken against folk who assumed that the commandment prohibiting theft did not apply to books. Some of the old books have inscribed in them awesome maledictions and imprecations upon anyone who would dare to steal them. Such unregenerate book-keepers are threatened with having their names blotted from the book of life, and with the prospect of spending an eternity of torment in the company of Annas and Caiaphas, Judas Iscariot and Pontius Pilate.

In such an atmosphere of reverence for books notable scholars and book-lovers were nurtured. Chaucer has left us a portrait of one such scholar in the person of the Clerk of Oxenford. In a day when worldly churchmen pulled all sorts of strings to get appointed to wealthy and influential parishes, the Clerk of Oxenford had neither benefice nor office. He rode a horse that was "lene as is a rake" and wore a threadbare cloak. Then, in a few lines, we are given the key to the whole picture:

For him was levere have at his beddes heed  
Twenty bokes, clad in blak or reed,  
Of Aristotle and his philosophye,  
Than robes riche.

---

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Such was his choice, and many in the long history of the church have made the same choice. The father of William Robertson Nicholl was the minister of a Free Church in Scotland with a stipend never exceeding two hundred pounds per annum. Yet he amassed a library of over seventeen thousand volumes. It was said that books overflowed into every room and passageway of the manse, and that Nicoll could find any book in the dark without a candle.

It has been generally agreed that ministers should read widely, wisely, and persistently if they hope to maintain the efficiency of their ministry. For better or worse, we ministers have to work with words. Whether we exhort or rebuke, whether we endeavor to comfort the sorrowing or guide the perplexed, we work with words. Even as an exposition of a text a sermon is, from one point of view, a literary effort. It involves the interpretation and application of a revelation that has been transmitted to us in a literary form, set in a literary context. When we try to determine the exact meaning of a word in our Greek Testaments we are likely to find references to secular literature as well as to other passages of Scripture. The usage of Saint Paul may be illustrated by reference to the usage of Plato or Xenophon, Homer or Euripides. Our English translation of the Bible is couched in terms that gained their currency in the tracts and ballads and broadsides and playhouses of Elizabethan England. The words we employ have acquired overtones and undertones of meaning because of their usage by others before us. Omnivorous readers do not necessarily become great writers or fluent speakers, but, as a general rule, facility and skill in the use of language is one of the fruits of wide reading.

As to what we should read, John Hutton quotes with approval the suggestion that we should read what we like, read what we don't like, and read what we ought to like. "As a general observation," he continues, "I should say, don't read very much with the direct and immediate view to preaching. Read to make an able and wise man of yourself, conversant with life spiritually discerned as life is discerned spiritually in history and philosophy and art, including poetry."<sup>1</sup> The reading of history and poetry and biography may not contribute a great deal to the making of next Sunday's sermon, but it will add greatly to our understanding of the workings of the human spirit, and, in the long run, such understanding will bear fruits in our ministry.

Sir William Osler advised medical students to have three well-filled rooms in their houses—the library, the laboratory, and the nursery—to

<sup>1</sup> Hutton, John A., *That the Ministry Be Not Blamed*, Hodder & Stoughton (n. d.), p. 149.

hold their treasures of books, balances, and bairns. His own library was a choice collection, reflecting the broad and catholic taste of its owner. It contained technical books relating to the work of the physician; it contained also editions of the great poets, essayists, and philosophers of the race. To minister effectively to the bodies of men the physician needs to know more than medicine and anatomy. To minister effectively in the church we need to know more than Greek and Hebrew, theology and church history. There is a sense in which we dare not count anything human alien to us if we are to speak any word from God to the men and women of our time.

Great literature that holds the mirror up to life can help us greatly in giving us a vicarious understanding of situations that are beyond the range of our own experience. We are confronted in our ministry with men and women who are out in deeps that we have never sounded—bearing sorrows that we have not known, facing problems we have not had to meet, carrying burdens that we may never have to carry. What, in God's name, can we say to them? Until life and its experiences tutor us, great literature which explores the heights and depths of which the human spirit is capable, can bring us some way along the path of understanding. The great poets who are "of imagination all compact" can be particularly helpful as guides in bringing us some degrees closer to the state in which we can rejoice with them that rejoice and weep with them that weep.

It may be noted, too, that the sympathetic imagination is a most valuable tool for exegesis. You may be able to parse and analyze a sentence of holy writ with a skill that brings joy to the heart of the examiner, and yet not come very close to apprehending the message it was intended to convey. Here, for instance, are a couple of sentences from the Book of Ezra that describe the scene at the laying of the foundation of the second temple:

But many of the priests and Levites, and chief of the fathers, who were ancient men, that had seen the first house, when the foundation of this house was laid before their eyes, wept with a loud voice, and many shouted aloud for joy:

So that the people could not discern the noise of the shout of joy from the noise of the weeping of the people.<sup>2</sup>

Grammar and syntax can take us a certain way toward the understanding of this statement, but they cannot take us to the heart of it. Only the sympathetic historical imagination that can picture the heartaches of these

<sup>2</sup> Ezra 3:12-13.

elders who had tasted the bitterness and humiliation of years of exile can take us anywhere close to the heart of the passage. Such a sympathetic historical imagination can be cultivated by a disciplined study of the literature that mirrors life. Shakespeare and Browning and Francis Thompson may contribute to our understanding of the Scriptures as well as Liddell and Scott.

The value of the reading which a minister does depends not only on what he reads, but on how he reads it. There is a kind of reading which is little more than a form of self-indulgence. We can loll back in an easy chair to skim through the pages of a book, and gain a few fleeting impressions of its general import. To come to grips with the living message of a great book requires some concentration of effort on our part.

Masters of the craft of the pulpit such as Alexander Whyte never weary of admonishing us to make notes as we read. They may be notes of agreement or of disagreement: they may be questions suggested for further study or investigation, or a plain statement of the argument as it unfolds. The impressions and ideas and suggestions that come to us in the course of our reading may seem at the time to be quite memorable, but if we do not take pains to make notes we are likely to find that they are tragically evanescent.

Each person is likely to develop his own method of making and keeping such notes. The practice of Alexander Whyte was to have an inter-leaved Bible, on the blank sheets of which he made references to relevant passages in his reading. He was well satisfied with his own method, and when Hubert Simpson was entering on his study for the ministry sent him an interleaved Bible and a note regarding its use:

I send for your acceptance today an inter-leaved Bible. I have used such a Bible ever since I was at your stage of study, and the use it has been to me is past all telling. For more than forty years I think I can say that never a week and scarcely a day has passed that I have not entered some note or notes into my Bible. And then I never preach or speak in any way that I do not consult my inter-leaved Bible. I never read a book without taking notes one way or another: and I never come in my reading on anything that sheds light on any passage of Scripture that I do not set the reference down in my Bible, over against the passage it illustrates.<sup>3</sup>

Such was Whyte's method, which worked well for him. Other men have followed other methods. Some keep loose-leaf notebooks for each book of the Bible. In this they put clippings and references gleaned in the course of their reading. Others have devised complex systems of

<sup>3</sup> Barbour, G. F., *Life of Alexander Whyte*, Hodder & Stoughton, 1923, p. 289.

filing folders and index cards in which they seek to preserve the fruits of their reading. The peril of an elaborate filing system is that it is apt to consume more time than it saves. The best file of all is undoubtedly the human head itself. It has the advantages of portability, accessibility, and commodiousness. Unlike other filing systems, the more that is put into it, the more it will hold. It may be, indeed, that the chief profit of other filing systems is that they are some aid to the memory. When we take pains to make notes of what we read, or concentrate our attention on a paragraph to make a summary of it to file away, we are increasing the possibility of committing it to memory. We are learning through the visual impression of reading, through the manual impression of writing, and through the concentration of effort required in the making and filing of the notes.

Most ministers find it advantageous to set objectives for themselves and arrange some program by which their reading is guided. Otherwise we are likely to be at the whim of passing moods and fancies, and particularly to be at the mercy of our own lethargy. One of the perils of the ministry is that we have such freedom in the use of our periods of study. We have no time clocks to punch. We can waste the hours that should be devoted to study in being chore boys around the manse. When we go into our study we can finish the novel we started the night before; we can lose ourselves in yesterday's newspaper, or set ourselves to the serious business of study. No one will know which we do—none but ourselves—and God. It is required in stewards that a man be found faithful, and it is surely required of those of us who have been called to the Christian ministry that we should be faithful stewards of the time that is available to us for serious study.

A minister who reads widely, wisely, and persistently will have meat to eat that the world knows not of. Such reading will aid him in understanding and interpreting the word of God for our generation. It will enrich his understanding of the heights and depths of which the human spirit is capable. Last, but not least, it will help to lead him from the knowledge that is vain because it knows so much, to the wisdom that is humble that it knows no more.

From Winfred E. Garrison

I

THE PREACHER WHO IS "not much of a reader" is in danger of soon being not much of a preacher. It is not that reading would give him ready-to-use material for sermons. Reading would, to be sure, undoubtedly furnish him some apt illustrations. More than that, it would supply him with ideas which could be made his own by the necessary processes of mastication, digestion, and assimilation. However, so far as the acquisition of ideas is concerned, the most valuable result of the minister's reading is not the transmission of thoughts but the stimulation of thinking. I am speaking now not of studying but of reading.

Reading and studying are not identical processes, though they are not unrelated since both have to do with books and other verbal records. They are two areas with a common frontier—and a somewhat indistinct one with unmarked boundaries. The minister needs to cultivate both. It does not matter if some of his dealing with books cannot be put definitely into one of these categories to the exclusion of the other, but some of it ought to be studying that clearly is not just reading, and some ought to be reading that positively is not studying. The distinction between them involves the contrasting attitudes of creativity and receptivity. It can also be defined in terms of differences of tension, intention, intensity, and tempo.

The word "creative" may have become a cant term, trite with too much loose use, but the attitude of the serious student is always active in a sense and to a degree that can probably be called creative without subjecting that word to any more abuse than it is accustomed to. That is to say, one who *studies* is consciously trying not only to acquire and remember but also to analyze, to compare, to sort out what is relevant to his purpose from what is irrelevant, and to organize what he is acquiring. If he is a good student, he has some constructive intent which motivates the whole operation, limits the field of his attention, and gives direction to his study.

The student as research scientist or historian may truly boast of a "reverence for facts" and a "mind open to all truth." What he means

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by this is that his mind is open to all the facts and hospitable to all the truth that are pertinent to his field of investigation. If he is an entomologist, he will collect facts about bugs; as entomologist, he will not listen to the song of the lark, though the same individual, in another capacity, may not only hear but record the wild bird's warble and treat it as material for either scientific study or esthetic enjoyment or both. The point is that the student as such is not only selective and directive in his activity but is definitely aiming to do something with the specialized knowledge he acquires. So it may be said that he is creative. For the student who gets his material from printed pages rather than from laboratory or field, reading is only the primary means of acquisition, as wielding a butterfly net is for the student of butterflies.

The reader *as reader* is receptive rather than creative. Of course, he has to be selective, too; and he'd better be intelligently selective, especially in these days when so many of the things most urgently pressed upon him are so little worth reading. It cannot be said that his reading should be purposeless either, though in saying that it should be purposeful I may seem to be breaking down the distinction I have just been building up between reading and studying. The difference is real but not absolute. The simon-pure reader's purpose may be genuine and earnest, but it is more diffuse. The reader cannot bring his purpose to so fine a focus or direct his reading to such a sharply defined end, under penalty of finding that he has become more student than reader.

What then is the purpose of the reader *as reader*? Primarily it is to enrich his mind, to gain the esthetic enjoyment that good literature gives, to satisfy and at the same time to diversify his interests, to acquire a variety of information for which he has no specific need but which is appropriate furniture for a well-equipped mind, to widen his acquaintance with men and things and make him more at home in the complex environment in which he lives, to put him in possession of the cultural heritage to which he is heir, to quicken his mental processes and stimulate his own independent thinking. These are large, vague, and general objectives. The purposes of study are specific and definite. The purposes of reading are wide and general. That is the real difference between them.

This naturally involves a difference in the degree of tension under which these two kindred activities are pursued. To the student, the proper advice is: Make a plan and a schedule; concentrate; get on your mark, get set, go. The work cannot be hasty, and much of it must be slow and patient drudgery, but it is necessarily done under the tension imposed by a specific

and dominant purpose. To the reader, the word is: Relax; you don't have to read anything you don't want to read; but *read*; you will enjoy it, and it will be good for you; the rich fields of literature are open to you.

The pleasure of reading books that one does not have to read is so great that it is a shame to speak of "required reading." Indeed, it is a contradiction of terms. The phrase has its legitimate use only in academic circles, but what it refers to then is not properly reading but one kind of study. The quality of reading, like that of mercy, is not strained. Reading at its best is voluntary and spontaneous, like eating. Following a prescribed diet is sometimes necessary, under pathological conditions, but it appears to be dull business. One seldom observes persons on a rigid diet manifesting much enthusiasm for their meals. Taking them is too much like taking medicine. It is doubtless better to read in that way, as though taking a prescription and under the doctor's orders, than not to read at all, but it is not the best way.

## II

The tempo of reading needs consideration too. It is unquestionably true that most readers read too slowly for their own good. Thus they either waste time that might better be put to other uses or fail to get the maximum pleasure and benefit from the limited time they can devote to reading. There is value in the new techniques that have been developed to speed up reading. I recommend them—as heartily as I honestly can, considering that I have never seriously studied or practiced them, my own system seeming to be sufficient for my needs. In one way or another, every mature person ought to acquire the ability to read much faster than most people do, or can. It is a grievous error to allow one's maximum comfortable reading speed to remain what it was when one completed the sixth grade, and that too often happens. What I am saying is, of course, that one should acquire an *ability* to read rapidly with ease, not that one should always read at top speed. I seem to remember a book called Czerny's *Velocity Studies* that piano students used to labor with. Its purpose was to give the pupil the digital dexterity to handle rapid passages, with no implication that he should play everything as fast as he could.

Different kinds of literature should be read at different speeds, just as each piece of music has its appropriate tempo. The Minute Waltz is supposed to be played in approximately sixty seconds (if the performer can), not to save time but because it gives the best effect at that speed. In a sense other than the one usually intended by the phrase in legal

documents, "time is of the essence" in a musical composition. If one wants to spend more time on the Minute Waltz, it is better to play it twice at the proper tempo than once as an andante. Similarly, only a foolish artist would wish to display his virtuosity by rendering Beethoven's Funeral March *prestissimo*. This principle applies to the reading of literature.

It is important to acquire the skill of rapid reading in order to be able to read rapidly the things that ought to be read rapidly. Light and middle-weight fiction are at this end of the time scale. So are most memoirs, and a great deal of history in which the narrative element predominates, and most books of travel. Something is lost besides time if such things are read at less than three or four times the speed of normal articulation. With such literature, the reader needs the kind of conspectus that is gained only by taking in a great deal of it in a short time, as one views a wide terrain from the window of an airplane and sees the panorama beneath him unroll at the rate of three hundred miles an hour. Some scenic values are revealed in this way that are hidden from him who travels more slowly. Not all kinds of scenery are best seen at high speed; but some kinds are. So of literature. In reading the kinds that have been mentioned, the tempo should be rapid. In legerdemain, the hand may be quicker than the eye; but in reading of the sort indicated, the eye should be quicker than the lips.

On the other hand, and at the other extreme, there is literature that should be read very slowly. The connotations and associations of each word are part of its meaning, and the grasping of these takes time. The fragrance of each phrase must be savored. The overtones of each verbal note must be permitted to register in consciousness, as well as the fundamentals. The resonance of words must be given time to manifest itself. When style is of the essence, and the deepest meanings reside in the flavor and color of words, in the subtle music of the voice, or in not too obvious allusions and symbolisms, then there must be no hurrying. Like a mountain echo, or like the reverberating tones of a carillon, such literature requires a slow pace with frequent pauses. The main point now is not to catch the sweep and flow of the whole, but to grasp the subtlest significance of each detail. Poetry, being basically an oral and auditory art, necessarily requires the tempo of speech. It may require a tempo even slower than that. In reading philosophy, sociology, or critical argument in any field, the proper speed of reading is determined by the mind's ability to grasp the ideas, not by the eye's ability to recognize the words.

## III

Aside from the initial remark that ministers ought to read as well as study, no specific advice has thus far been offered about the minister's reading except what is equally applicable to all readers. I am not sure that ministers need any special advice about their reading other than the kinds of suggestions that are equally applicable to all intelligent persons. When the minister begins to permit his reading to be determined by his professional status and occupation as a minister, at that moment he begins to veer over into the field of study, rather than pure reading. This may require some qualifications, but for the present it can serve as the hook on which to hang my first suggestion about the minister's reading.

1. A great part of the minister's reading ought to be done without the slightest regard to the fact that he is a minister. He is a person before he is a preacher. For the enrichment and nourishment of his personality he needs what can be supplied only by a varied diet of reading. All those objectives which, as already indicated, constitute the purpose of the reader *as reader* are valid purposes and guides for the minister's reading, just as they are valid purposes and guides for the reading of a lawyer, merchant, doctor, or mechanic.

2. Yet there is no dodging the fact that the minister, *as minister*, has some special needs which can be supplied by well-directed reading. My second suggestion, therefore, is that it is advantageous for the minister to select some special field of interest, directly or indirectly connected with his calling, and do a considerable amount of reading in that particular area.

I know several ministers who never fail to read anything they can find about Lincoln; others who specialize, respectively, on Robert Burns, Wordsworth, William Blake, the German mystics, the life and work of the Apostle Paul, Roman Christian monuments, and Renaissance art. One might read extensively in modern poetry, or in contemporary fiction, with a special view to noting the spiritual values which they express, the problems and needs of various kinds of persons in the world today, or the social criticism that they embody. Imaginative literature sometimes comes closer to the heart of reality than literal descriptions and scholarly analyses. Even science, philosophy, and history, though they invite intensive study, are rewarding fields for those also who maintain their amateur standing by continuing to be simply readers. The number of areas from which to choose is practically limitless. It does no harm to switch fields of interest

from time to time—but not too often, lest the advantages of a degree of concentration and continuity be forfeited. In any case, the major interest should not occupy the whole of one's reading time. Variety is as important as a certain amount of concentration.

"Something old and something new" is a good motto for reading. Neither the classics nor the contemporaries should be ignored. Not all old books are classics. The shelves of the great libraries are loaded with old books that are as dead as their authors. Most of them have some value for specialized research students, though very little for readers. The amount of stuff that has got into print since movable type was invented is staggering. It is estimated that 30,000 titles were printed during the first half century of the art of printing, that is, before the year 1500; and that was a mere trickle compared with the torrent of print that followed. Time and the cumulative judgment of mankind are severe critics, and usually pretty good ones. If, out of the millions of books that have been printed and are now sold, a few hundred have been deemed worthy to survive, one can be sure that it was not by chance. There was something in them that entitled them to this longevity. One runs no great risk in choosing for reading some of these books which the world has not permitted to share the swift mortality that overtakes the bulk of all that is printed.

It is not a conflicting or different exhortation but only the other half of the same one to say that new books and current magazines are necessary for the reader's complete satisfaction. There is a tingle of intellectual excitement in thumbing through a pile of publishers' fall announcements, or even reading the advertisements of new books, and even more in looking along the shelves of the late arrivals in a bookstore. I am told that some readers derive pleasure and profit from reading book reviews in periodicals they regard as generally reliable. The reader may utilize such sources of information and stimulation but in the choice of new books he really has to proceed at his own risk. Even the most expert critics cannot tell with certainty which of them will become part of the permanent treasury of the world's literature, though anybody can easily recognize a great many that certainly will not. Only time can tell that. Even so, it is nothing against a book that it is journalistic in the sense of dealing with a present situation and meeting a present need but having no prospect of long life. The reader, ministerial or other, should make a reasonable distribution of his attention between the timely and the timeless.

Finally, brethren, read books as much as you can with due regard for other duties and activities, but *don't* be bookish preachers.



*From Ernest H. Jeffs*

ON ONE ASPECT ONLY of the theme of "The Minister's Reading" do I venture to write with a grain of confidence. Only a grain—for I write as a layman very ill-equipped in respect to those fields of literature, such as systematic theology and biblical scholarship, in which the minister is peculiarly at home. My excuse for writing at all on this theme is (1) that I have had the privilege of close association with ministers for over fifty years, and have taken a particular interest in the art of preaching; and (2) that the aspect of the subject upon which I propose to touch is that of the minister's "general reading"—a subject on which a friend of the ministry may offer a modest suggestion or two in spite of his comparative ignorance of the pastor's more specialized studies.

Supposing a minister to have resolved to be a reading man, keeping himself decently abreast of the literature of religion in its special sense, the question then to be considered is whether he shall become also a serious reader of general literature; if so, what proportion of his time should he devote to books of this kind; and what use shall he make of the instruction and inspiration (if any) which he may gain from his "secular" studies?

Is it a minister's *duty* to be a student of general literature? No answer to that question will be forthcoming from the present writer! In many years of religious journalism he has never once, so far as his memory serves, told ministers what they *ought* to do. In this matter of general reading there is a reason for his attitude quite apart from a layman's humility or diffidence. Reading undertaken as an "ought," largely or solely from a sense of duty, is very largely reading wasted. Boswell tells of a German student who was discovered solemnly jumping over chairs in an effort to "learn how to be lively." This was a figure not very much more awkward than that of the minister who "tackles" Shakespeare or Dickens, earnestly or painstakingly, from a sense of duty only, and without any natural taste for, or curiosity about, poetry, drama, humor, style, etc. Literature teaches us by delighting us. If after a fair trial it fails to delight us, we had better leave it alone.

Surely a better way to approach the subject is to invite the minister to consider how much he loses of "instructive delight," as I venture to call

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it, by his neglect of good general literature in its various branches. The minister's loss is, of course, the loss of his people also.

Perhaps theology comes into this, after all! The value which a minister places upon general literature must depend very largely upon his degree of respect for the motions and achievements of the human mind, heart, and spirit. If he believes that only one Book is in a true sense "inspired," he cannot logically regard most other books as being, at the best, anything more than pleasant entertainment, and the reading of them of very slight relevance to his peculiar calling as preacher and apologist. It is only when he thinks of literature as being a sort of "testament of the spirit of man"—confirming, not competing with, those Testaments in which we believe we hear, supremely, the witness of the Spirit of God—that it is joyously perceived to be an illimitable realm of enrichment and enlightenment. Take one single word of "general literature": "Let justice be done though the heavens fall." Who wrote that? It is certainly not found in any book of religious "revelation." But can we thrill to its noble defiance of injustice, its defiance of the gods themselves if they should prove to be unjust, without believing that something speaks through the spirit of man which is closely, awe-inspiringly akin to the Father Spirit of God?

But I was not invited into this symposium to talk theology; and I proceed to my second question: how much of his reading time should a minister devote to "general literature"? There is no precise answer to that save in the conscience and common sense of the minister himself; but it may at least be suggested that the minister would do well to devote certain "office hours" to his specialist reading, and then consider himself free to read a novel, a book of verse, a history, or a biography, in the leisure hours that remain to him—without any uneasy doubts about "wasting time."

This is the really important point: is our ideal "a minister who reads" (for duty or relaxation) or "a reading man in the ministry"? My own vote is for the latter ideal. I have already acknowledged that a minister may not be a naturally bookish person, and that nobody has a right to exhort or rebuke him on that score; but I cannot help thinking that a reading man brings a contribution to the work of the ministry that in these days is of great and increasing importance. He is so much the better equipped for commending and defending the faith to a generation which, at its best, knows great literature, and will listen the more respectfully to the preacher or apologist who gives evidence that he knows it too. But the minister is not to read in order to show off his knowledge. He is to use it, not display it.

One of the chief "uses" of general reading is, of course, in connection with the art of preaching. A pressman who has listened to pulpit and platform oratory since the days of Joseph Parker may perhaps be allowed to offer a word or two of advice here.

First, as to Style. If a man has read enough, and wisely enough, to have acquired a taste for a good prose style (plain or colored), let him take peculiar care to make use of that part of his reading in a negative rather than a positive way; in other words, to guard his pulpit style against crudities or exuberances rather than to search for a strikingly individual style of his own, full of fine-sounding phrases and cadences. The best English I ever heard from the pulpit (I say this as an Englishman, but without flattery) was that used by the generation of American preachers which included Lyman Abbott, George A. Gordon of Boston, and my old friend Charles Jefferson of New York. In style it was in a sense lean and unadorned, and yet it carried with it a compelling conviction that these plain words-of-one-syllable preachers knew the best that was to be known in English literature.

John Morley wrote of Edmund Burke that he had "the sacred gift of inspiring men to use a grave diligence in caring for high things, and in making their lives at once rich and austere." A grand ideal of living, and, as I think, including a phrase which suggests the best sort of excellence in pulpit style. "Rich and austere"; this is a very different thing from that "literary flavor" which was so much admired (in England at least) a generation ago, and which so deeply embarrassed every listener who had some slight knowledge of the constituents of a sound prose style. Let a man real well and widely, and he need never fear that the richness will not shine through the austerity.

Second, as to Illustration, Quotation, and Literary Reference generally. The present writer is well aware that he is not now addressing a class of seminary students; but he thinks his experienced readers will agree with him that sermons can be "made" or fatally marred by the skill and taste, or the lack of one or the other or both, with which quotations and literary references are introduced. He may not carry his readers with him on the particular point that it is best not to "refer" to a whole book; at least not in such a way as to make the entire argument of the sermon depend upon such reference. In his youth the writer suffered much from sermons on "The Religion of Robert Browning" or "The Faith of Robert Louis Stevenson." He is just as much averse to the sermons of 1954 which are built up around the latest publication of Mr. T. S. Eliot or Mr. Gerald

Heard. Never let the preacher give the impression that the Faith was more or less in danger until this newest new book appeared, and that it has now renewed its lease of life. The literary reference—whole book or single sentence or verse—must always, for full religious effectiveness, be used in helping to hammer home the preacher's own self-contained argument. The preacher has no need to take second place to any author he may find it helpful to quote. As Mr. George F. Babbitt would say, "He hasn't got to take anybody's smoke." He speaks with the supreme authority of a prophet and an apostle.

*Full religious effectiveness.* That is the thing; and effectiveness does not mean "effect" in the theatrical sense of the word. We have so often heard a sermon robbed of its full effectiveness by a superfluity of literary references; one really good and memorable quotation is enough for a sermon of twenty minutes. A second one is all too likely to knock the first out of the listener's head. A first-rate quotation is such a good thing that I must qualify what I wrote a moment ago about the preacher relying upon his own argument, and not upon that of the author from whom he quotes. There is nothing against a preacher deciding, as he runs over the manuscript or notes of his forthcoming sermon, that Milton or Wordsworth, or Bunyan or Newman, said a certain thing better than he could say it himself, and artfully "placing" the quotation so that the effectiveness of the sermon is largely staked upon it. One of the most thrilling sermons I ever heard owed the greater part of its success to the preacher's skill in introducing right at the end, and without comment, two brief but noble quotations. One was from Bacon: "The nobler a soul is, the more objects of compassion it hath." The second was from Emerson: "With the truly cultivated man, the orphan, the maiden, the poor man, and the hunted slave, feel SAFE." I have capitalized the last word because (as my preacher evidently perceived) everything depends upon that particular emphasis.

It is a point in favor of the habit of general reading that the best short quotations come out of a genuine knowledge of the big books. Hard-pressed pastors cannot be blamed for using volumes of ready-picked quotations; but experience shows (and my sole authority for writing these things is that I have had a long experience of preaching which failed or succeeded in hitting the mark) that there is a certain danger in relying upon "elegant extracts." You may fail, through not knowing the context, to bring out the full force of your quotation, and you may unconsciously use such an introductory word as will place your author, in the minds of

your hearers, in a class of thinkers to which he does not really belong. "Aside from that," as I think you say in the United States, you may find yourself rather embarrassed when a young member of your flock wants to know more about the book from which you have quoted with such unction.

A *young* member of your flock. Yes, and the thought of his youth and his questioning spirit may well be constantly in the preacher's mind when he "uses" in the pulpit the profits of his reading. He is not bound to read any particular book; but he *is* bound to read it, if he reads it at all, with proper attention, and to quote from it with the most scrupulous accuracy. *Verify your references.* Scarcely any fault in preaching alienates the sympathy of intelligent youth so easily as a "fluffed" quotation; or, rather, a *habit* of quoting inaccurately. This habit not only induces in the mind of the critical young hearer a doubt of the minister's intellectual capacity. It does something which is far worse. It induces a doubt of his ethical integrity; for he lies under suspicion of pretending to have read books which in fact he has not read.

It is not long since a London preacher referred to "that delightful creation of Dickens, Poor Jo of *Bleak House*," and proceeded to outline with gusto the main characteristics of Joe Gargery of *Great Expectations*. You are not bound in duty to be acquainted with either Jo or Joe; but you *are* bound in duty not to mix them up. Such an inaccuracy as this comes, one fears, within that category of "petty infidelities" which so moved the wrath of Thomas Carlyle.

What an old-fashioned name—Carlyle! It may serve to introduce the question whether, when the minister has read a decent amount of "standard" literature in some or all of its branches, he is under a moral obligation to make himself familiar with the newer books, and the newest books: the books which "everybody is talking about." Here is a suggested answer—in two parts. So far as the health of his own soul is concerned he is under no such obligation; a review or two in reputable journals will tell him all he needs to know about these books. So far, however, as he believes them to be influencing people for whom he has a pastoral concern, it may justly seem a duty to read one now and then for the sake of intelligently discussing it. The one thing he must not do is to criticize these books, or even hint a criticism of them, without reading them. He is unwise if he attacks any author of the day on the strength of a general (and hearsay) knowledge of the trend of his thought and his probable influence upon his readers' morals.

Think of the dreadful injustice done to Tom Paine by a whole genera-



tion of Christian people—perhaps by two or three generations—who, without reading a line of him, lumped together his best works and his worst (like the Scots landlady in *St. Roman's Well*) under some such heading as "bawbee blasphemies."

My allotted space has been mainly taken up, I perceive, by observations on the pulpit "use" of general reading. And yet I did not intend to stress the utilitarian aspect of a familiar acquaintance with the poets and the storytellers, the historians and the speculators. I wanted to stress chiefly, for the minister, the inward enrichment which comes from being a reading man. If he knows books, other than those specially appertaining to his calling, he knows more than the nonreading minister of at least six elements in human life and thought: Nobility, Beauty, Drama, Romance, Humor, Pathos. May not such knowledge tend to make him a tenderer pastor, a wiser preacher and teacher, and a more cheerfully confident witness to the Faith?

*From Gilbert T. Rowe*

**P**REACHERS DO READ, and they must read. Much of their reading is light, easy, and casual, just such as any informed person must do in order to keep up with the times. However, in addition to light reading for entertainment, amusement, relaxation, and general information, it is necessary for the minister during the greater part of the time to keep on hand a book which requires serious, careful, and critical study. To this kind of book the preacher should apply himself for two or three hours at a sitting, not only for the sake of the knowledge gained but also for the mental discipline involved.

Since the minister must be well informed as a leader in his community, he needs to read the daily paper, with discretion, giving it enough time to keep up with the news and what the leading columnists are saying, and yet not so much time that he will not have enough mind left for serious study. If the community in which he lives has both a morning and an afternoon paper, the pastor will find it desirable to take both in order to keep up with what the people, including the members of the church of which he is pastor, are doing. One afternoon, soon after the writer had entered upon a new pastorate, he saw in the paper that an inmate of a home for elderly women had died and that the funeral would be conducted the next day by the pastor of the church whose denomination ran the home. The article, however, mentioned the fact that the deceased lady was a member of the church of which the writer was pastor, and the information which enabled him to be present to take part in the funeral of one of his own members was worth more than the price of a year's subscription!

The minister will also need to read regularly one or more of the weekly publications which gather and sum up current events with greater accuracy and more careful editing than is possible for the daily paper. Such publications give the preacher a total view of activities in all fields, including national and international politics, business, medicine, education, religion, and science. Since Einstein's theory of relativity and atomic fission have come upon the scene, it is not possible for any but experts to understand the technicalities of science, but such weeklies can give the

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intelligent reader some idea of what is going on in the scientific field. Recently the writer read an extended article on the H-bomb only to realize after he had finished that he had understood only one idea. The article stated that hydrogen had to be practically pure in order to burn, and that since only one tenth of the ocean was composed of hydrogen, it would not be possible to burn up the ocean.

Of course, the preacher should read one or more periodicals of his own denomination. Whether he is obsessed with the notion that his group is the only true church or certainly the best church, or whether he holds that his denomination is only one in the family of churches which make up the whole body of organized Christianity, he will need to keep up with his own group in order to take part in the necessary team work of his denomination. A religious journal independent of denominational affiliation will be of great help in enabling the preacher to keep posted on what all the churches are doing and to view world affairs from the Christian point of view. The book reviews in both types of publication will be of help to the preacher in selecting his reading. A monthly or quarterly journal will also be of great help in keeping up with the many currents of religious thought and in getting some idea, through the book reviews, of what the best minds are producing in religion and related fields.

The preacher should read a solid book occasionally outside the field of his immediate interest. Certainly he must know what the leading philosophers are thinking, because he is keenly aware of the fact that any purely materialistic, secularistic, or humanistic philosophy is inconsistent with Christianity and all other religions. Next to philosophy would come psychology, because the preacher needs to know what the specialists are able to learn of that strange creature man, whose welfare is his constant concern. That latest arrival among the sciences, sociology, will also demand attention. There are laws of social well-being, and the sociologist undertakes to ascertain what those laws are. The preacher needs his help in trying to get people to live together in mutual helpfulness and good will.

But whatever reading a preacher may give special attention to or neglect, his steady and unceasing subject must be theology. Some preachers make excellent pastors, others are especially interested in organization and administration, and still others are drawn to the intellectual side of their calling. Though some preachers confess to a dislike for theology, the very nature of the ministerial calling demands that the minister study long and widely the relationship of man to God. General MacArthur has said that the great controversial issues among nations are theological, and

President Eisenhower has declared that all political, social, and racial problems can be satisfactorily solved only through religion. If statesmen express such convictions, the preacher, who is "a man of God," must put forth every effort to give people an insight into the nature, purpose, and activity of God.

No preacher at the present time would follow the example of Timothy Dwight in presenting an elaborate system of theology in a long series of long sermons. Neither the time allotted for the sermon nor the lack of interest of the congregation, especially in the speculative aspects of theology, would permit of such a course. But all good preaching must not only be solidly grounded in theological convictions, but such convictions must continually crop out in the sermon. Henry Sloane Coffin relates an incident which illustrates this aspect of a minister's aim and responsibility. He was in the railway station in New York City waiting for a train to take him to a town in New England, where he was to preach the commencement sermon at a school for boys. A classmate came upon him and casually inquired, "Where are you going, Henry?" "Up into New England to preach the commencement sermon at a boys' school." "And what are you going to preach to them about?" "God," was the laconic reply. "God? What do you know about God? What does anybody know about God?" "Well," answered Coffin, "I may not know much about God, but what I do know is the most precious bit of knowledge I have, and I want to share it with those boys."

The preacher needs to spend much of his time in reading the Bible as the background and fountainhead of the Christian religion. Since the Bible is both an ancient and an Oriental book, few people except preachers and professional teachers of religion will take the time necessary to read it with anything like a thorough understanding. The preacher owes it to the Christian public to ascertain as nearly as possible what each biblical writer meant to say to his readers, what the ancient readers would understand the writer to have said, and also to interpret the utterances of the writers of the Bible for the readers of the present time in the light of all the knowledge that has been acquired during the intervening centuries. What a task! Well may the preacher exclaim with Paul, "Who is sufficient for these things?"

The preacher will need to refresh his mind from time to time by recurring to the great classics which have survived the ravages of time, such as the writings of Plato and Augustine, and certainly he will repeatedly renew his acquaintance with the writings which are standard in his own

ecclesiastical household. The Roman Catholic priest will comply with the papal order enjoining the steady reading of Thomas Aquinas, the Lutheran minister will read in Luther's *Commentary on Galatians* occasionally, preachers of the Reformed and Presbyterian branches will continue to pore over Calvin's *Institutes*, and Methodists will study John Wesley's works. However, it will be necessary to keep in mind while studying these earlier authors the changes in the world view which have come about through the general acceptance of the theory of biological evolution, the comparative study of religions, and the historical and literary study of the Bible and all other "sacred" books.

In his effort to understand and appraise currents of religious thought other than that in which he finds himself, the preacher must read some of the writings of able men whose views are quite contrary to his own. To understand "the continental theology" he will need to read such noted writers as Barth and Brunner, and to get a clear view of the trends in American thought he must read books of a definitely progressive nature and also books coming out of a widespread and vigorous movement which is reproducing the forms of religious thought generally prevalent at the beginning of the century. The "liberal" preacher would like to know what is causing so many preachers, even students in theological seminaries, to return to a strictly Bible theology of the authoritarian type.

A young minister is fortunate if during the earlier years of his ministry he is able to discover a leader who impresses him as being a religious thinker of the first order and therefore worthy of a determined and persistent effort to master his thought. The Fiji Islander had a notion that the strength of a conquered enemy entered into his own mind and body, and some such experience comes to a young preacher when he feels that he has mastered the thought of a master. In some cases it may be one book into which the writer has been able to put the whole of himself so completely that the young preacher will read it over and over until every sentence has been brooded over, understood, and made his own. In other cases it will be all the available writings of the favored author.

The experience of one young preacher may be of help at this point. At the beginning of the century the writer came into possession of James Martineau's *The Seat of Authority*. There was something so fascinating about the author's literary style, his clarity of thought, his spiritual insight, and his moral judgment that it started the reader on a quest that did not end until all the available writings of the author had been carefully read. A little later Auguste Sabatier's *Religions of Authority and the Religion*

of *the Spirit* confirmed and supplemented Martineau. Still later Peter Taylor Forsyth's Yale Lectures for 1907, entitled *Positive Preaching and Modern Mind*, seemed so surcharged with spiritual power that it was read over and over with great profit through a period of several years. The writer continued with Forsyth until all available books from his pen had been read, some of them several times—though, it must be added, much of his writing was too subtle, sententious, and oracular to be convincing.

Of course, a list of writers who might seem worthy of such devoted study on the part of young preachers at the present time would be entirely different from such a list at or near the beginning of the century. Recently a brilliant young preacher, who is now an editor of a religious weekly, told the writer that he found Paul Tillich the most inspiring and enlightening author he had ever read. A teacher in a leading theological seminary after having received his doctor's degree from Yale said that Robert L. Calhoun stood out in his mind as the greatest master of theology he had ever heard. Students in the Divinity School with which the writer is connected tend to place E. Stanley Jones and Harry Emerson Fosdick in first place as religious writers. One preacher may find Reinhold Niebuhr the most worthy of thorough study; another, John Baillie; another, Harris Franklin Rall; and another, Emil Brunner. Each preacher will find his own. One book that would merit thorough mastery is A. E. Garvie's *The Christian Doctrine of God*.

Most preachers find it profitable to read sermons, not with a view to getting predigested preaching material, but rather to see how a master of the art of preaching unfolds and presents his subject. It is never wise to preach another man's sermon; each man does his best when he is most himself—and besides, he might get himself accused of plagiarism!



*From Miles H. Krumbine*

I DO NOT FEEL competent—in spite of editorial invitation—to set forth an ideal selection of books for the minister to read, but am offering at the end of this article a list of books which I myself have read and used and found helpful.

It was agreed that no space need be given to a selection of the minister's working tools, such as a dictionary of the Bible; a commentary (by all means, *The Interpreter's Bible!*); lives of Christ, of St. Paul, of the prophets; a good encyclopedia; books on prayer and worship; a good church history; a dictionary, an atlas, Fowler's *Modern English Usage*, etc. Such selections will have been made upon entering the ministry—and under better auspices.

I am really writing to the young man, say five years or so in his ministry. His first success is behind him, his stock of laid-up resources is running low, he no longer feels so sure that he is in full control of his destiny. Moreover, he begins to suspect that he has limitations, that he is not the boy-wonder those superbly charming dowagers (both male and female) one finds in every congregation have been telling him he is—in short, he is on the verge of humility, and so of maturity. He may even be wondering what to preach over the next five years.

He then is likely to do one of three things. Either he will change churches and repeat, mostly, the five years' preaching he has already done: the open road to mediocrity. Or, he will read other men's sermons and start using them: the intellectual sleeping pill of the ministry. Or, he will knuckle down to a man-sized program of reading, to poise himself for that indefinite future that now is opening really quite brilliantly since humility has come upon him.

If by then, however, he has permitted himself to become involved in so many "duties" in his church, and in so many civic "responsibilities" in his community, that he simply, in all good conscience, cannot find time to read enough, he had better change churches and communities so that he can reprogram himself on a scale wise enough to give him adequate time for reading. How many of us have had to choose between being a minister and being just a "useful citizen"!

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## I. PURPOSE IN READING

The minister's primary function is not to fill a church but to fill a pulpit. To fill a pulpit he has to feed the mind. To feed the mind he has to read. True, there are some men, no doubt, who fill pulpits well on very little reading; I suspect that they are made on the order of genius and thus are very treacherous examples for the rest of us. Even so, Goethe reread Oliver Goldsmith's *Vicar of Wakefield* many times and slept with it under his pillow for many years.

Clearly, the minister will want to read with a purpose. Reading for reading's sake is not only meaningless but also time-wasting and so, frustrating. Ruskin's advice still holds: Don't you know that if you read that book, you cannot read this one? but is not this book the one you ought to read? What, then, is our purpose in reading?

I read for eight specific reasons:

1. *For indoctrination.* Each fall, either the last week in August or the first week in September, I read a book in theology. This is not with a view to scholarship; the minister, as I see it, does not aim at that. The scholar mines and refines the ore; the minister mints the coin and puts it in circulation. It is rather for the renewal of confidence and the winning of inner poise. There is one minister who, many times over the last twenty years, has reread Sorley's *Moral Values and the Idea of God*. For a spiritual bracer before the race begins there is nothing better (unless it be Pascal's *Pensées*). It is an effective antidote for that "over-educated weakness of purpose" Matthew Arnold detected as the root of evil in our middle-class society.

2. *For intellectual humility.* Who can read Whitehead or Toynbee or Lewis Mumford and feel himself superior or even adequate? Such books put one in the mood to learn which is the first step necessary to our responsibility to go out and teach, that is, preach.

3. *For insight and understanding.* Observation is not enough; interpretation is needed too. A solid reading of Vico and Sorokin (*The Crisis of our Age*) or Ortega y Gasset (*The Revolt of the Masses*), and Reinhold Niebuhr (*The Nature and Destiny of Man*), and Gordon Allport's books, help one to understand this age and the things we observe in it. We know enough, perhaps too much; it is understanding that we lack. I have good authority on my side; John Dewey says, "The twentieth century knows more and understands less than any previous century in history."

While on this point, I want to put in a bid for the reading of biography, provided it is by a good biographer, i.e., one who can forget himself and

give his subject a chance to reveal itself. Read Catherine Drinker Bowen's *John Adams and the American Revolution*, and discover the inordinate value of such biography as a source of insight into human personality, its potentialities and powers of self-discipline and achievement.

4. *For a comprehensive view.* Again and again, it seems, one has to take the long view, to stand off, as it were, and look at the tapestry of human history to see if he can detect the pattern that is being woven. It is perhaps our only defense against a ruinous, superficial optimism which seems to me to be more deadly than pessimism. "He who finds history speaking hopefully lends her a language which is not her own." History, in other words, despairs of man and offers him no hope. That is naked pessimism. But the man who wrote that sentence is Albert Schweitzer, and rather than unnerving him for high endeavors, it made his exertions seem all the more urgently necessary. Beyond history lies hope, and hope is born of religion; she is (in Alain's phrase) "the daughter of the will" to do.

My current enthusiasm among these "comprehensive view" books is Sédillot's *History of the World*, a short but competent, racy book, full of insight, and, best of all, it can be had for thirty-five cents (Mentor books). Again, by way of illustration, when Whitehead wrote, "The twentieth century is more akin to the sixteenth than to any previous century," I went at once for Henry Osborn Taylor's *Thought and Expression in the Sixteenth Century*.

5. *For illustration.* A sermon, first of all, must be interesting; that is the cement that holds the preacher and his congregation firmly together. The wise use of illustration is a quick way of being interesting. The illustration, however, must advance (or clinch) the "argument" of the sermon. For that reason the preacher has to find his own illustrations. He finds them by observation, by invention (if he is clever enough), but above all by reading; reading not for illustrations but *illustrations as a by-product of reading*.

Biography, naturally, is a rich field for such a purpose, where the picking is excellent. So is the *Encyclopedia Britannica*. (Parkes Cadman once told me that during one summer vacation he read every biographical article in it. Cadman was a preacher who filled his church at the same time that he filled his pulpit.) Novels help, but infrequently; plays are good, but not much nowadays. Obviously, other men's sermons are a gold mine for illustrations, but if you use one of them be sure to give the other man very liberal credit, and be doubly sure that it illustrates your sermon well.

You cannot marry an eagle to a nightingale, though both are noble birds. Personally, I do not read other men's sermons because I have too good a memory!

6. *For style.* Somerset Maugham tells us that when he set out to become a writer he would copy a sentence from Jonathan Swift; then he would try to improve on it by arranging the words or by saying the same thing in other words, supposedly better than Swift's—only to discover that Swift had used exactly the right word in exactly the right place. Whereupon he saturated himself with Swift. Maugham's style is his own and not another person's, but it is better than it would have been had he not read Jonathan Swift.

Let the preacher be instructed; he too needs to acquire "style," the art of "making words behave." To this end let him read, over and over again, the parable of the Prodigal Son; there are 502 words in that story (King James Version), and 405 are words of one syllable (as pronounced). Let him read Newman's *Parochial and Plain Sermons*; page after page of these sermons are two-thirds filled with words of one syllable. One-syllable words conduce to simplicity of utterance, and that is what we are all after, or ought to be. There is such a thing as being simple, in thought and in word, without being commonplace.

Again, the sermon is a work of art; as such it is akin to the short story. Why not, then, read O. Henry's stories hard, and catch on to his knack of the startling and the clinching conclusion—what the advertising men today call the "punch line." It will deliver the preacher from that embarrassing experience of not knowing when to stop.

7. *For current need.* The most ancient and most honorable function of the ministry is "the cure of souls." Our present time of troubles has re-erected this function into a place of major importance in the minister's daily life. Since 1938 I have seen an average of 100 people a month in conference on personal problems. Some, naturally were sent to the psychiatrist (or the medical psychologist). But, alas, ever so many of them had already been to him! My experience, I do not doubt, is in no sense unique.

The minister may not expect to ask the psychiatrist to do what he ought to be doing (and vice versa), and I have faith to believe few of them do. Man needs a way of life in which he can and does believe; he will not believe in any way of life that is not ethically inspired; he will not believe any way of life is so inspired, adequately, unless it has fallen under the major influence of Jesus Christ. Fundamentally, man desires nothing so much, deep in his heart, as to be Christlike. Thus clearly is

the minister's work cut out for him in his dealing with people in his study as well as in the pulpit.

To this end study is indicated, study and common sense (perhaps the hardest kind of study). Of the spate of books available, asking to be "studied," I would like to suggest that the writings of Gordon Allport, Franz Alexander, and Karen Horney have helped me most.

8. *For the culture of the inner life.* If people need to worship God and hear sermons as a part of such worship—and they do—ministers are sadly undernourished and run a great risk of becoming unvital; *they* do not hear sermons nor do they participate in corporate worship except as they conduct it, a very different thing. But they still need worship and sermons. They approximate both by the use of devotional literature. As a young minister, I found Law's *Serious Call to a Devout and Holy Life* was manna from heaven. Later, St. Francis de Sales' *Introduction to the Devout Life* served well. I am very partial now to Fénelon's *Meditations for Every Day of the Month*. Better than the best, it goes without saying, is Augustine's *Confessions*, though on a different order. Pascal's *Pensées* I put just below St. Augustine.

André Gide's *Journals* gave me, quite unexpectedly, an astonishing number of highlights on the Sermon on the Mount. Whitehead's *Adventures of Ideas* gave me a wholly new point of view on "the ideal as we have it in Jesus," which Canon Streeter said "is false or it is final."

In 1952, when our steep and swift decline in morals hit me hard, I went back to Bergson's *Two Sources of Morality and Religion* (1935) for a superb analysis of the reasons for that decline. Alain, the French essayist and social philosopher, whom I did not discover until 1953, in *Mars—the Truth About War*, not only said some illuminating things about human nature (pessimism is the natural state of man), but he also led me to Descartes' *Passions of the Soul*. The *Mirrors of Downing Street* yielded the unforgettable phrase (of character analysis), "he had the wings of an eagle and the soul of a sparrow." The phrase is a complete exegesis of Toynbee!

Shakespeare's *Anthony and Cleopatra* expounds middle-aged lust adequately, as his *Timon of Athens* lays bare the spiritual illness we call "vanity," and his *Julius Caesar* exposes the ancient, but more peculiarly modern, sin of "infatuation"; his *King John* is still the best clue to the whole problem of war and peace: "how oft the sight of means to do ill deeds makes ill deeds done" (Act IV, Scene 2).

In 1916, I was a very young minister with a spiritually complicating



war on my hands. That war shattered my trust in the "religion of progress" completely. Like an answer to prayer, along came Shailer Mathews' *The Spiritual Interpretation of History*. It did for me then what Butterfield is doing for me now. Whereupon I wrote a little note to the author, whom I did not know. Thus began a friendship with a very great and gallant Christian gentleman, that flourished and deepened over the years.

And so one might go on. Reading is the minister's constantly beckoning frontier, inviting him to all manner of exciting discovery.

### III. HOW MUCH SHOULD A MINISTER READ?

One book a week is a minimum average for the minister, provided it is a really significant book like, say, H. Richard Niebuhr's *Christ and Culture*. Two a week would be closer to the mark for a man who is striving to fill his pulpit. I know one young minister, overwhelmed by a stirring sense of his own limitations in knowledge, wisdom, and insight, who read five books a week, and kept it up for three and a half years, despite a heavy schedule of parish duties, in a city church of more than a thousand members. Obviously this meant a severe budgeting of time, even as all of us have to budget our money and time our sermons. There are still, however, twenty-four hours in the day and, also, there are forms of taking exercise that take less time than golf.

The art of more rapid reading can be learned. Three suggestions may be in order: (1) Read more than one book at a time. The shift from the one to the other rests you and you get more read in the same length of time. (2) Read a difficult book constantly; it strengthens the muscles of the mind and makes other reading easier. I noticed that after a two-hour bout with fifty pages of *Process and Reality* (Whitehead) I "breezed through" Paul Valéry's *Variety* (in English). Even an automobile runs faster and more effortlessly when the steep grade levels off and you can shift into high. (3) Always have a book about you; you can snatch many a fifteen minutes for it when you are kept waiting for any number of relatively sufficient reasons. William James, after all, did much of his reading riding the street cars.

Time for reading can be found. I know, because I know men as busy as any of us who have found it. Alibis are strictly out of order.

### IV. ON OWNING BOOKS

Owning books is important, just as marrying a wife is important—



and for exactly the same reason, viz., love, or in the case of books, something akin to it. When Washington Gladden, at a time of great age, went to Los Angeles as guest preacher at the First Congregational Church, he arrived (so the man who met him at the train told me) with two suitcases filled with books and with little of anything else; he brought his intellectual family with him.

Books that are your own can be underscored; five years later, when the book is read again, mental growth can be gauged by the underscoring. How else to gauge that growth I do not know.

Two questions emerge at once: books cost money, and money is limited, so what? A certain percentage of your income must go for books, just as a certain other percentage must go for life insurance. Are not books also a resource for the future?

The second question: how to know what to buy? (1) Book reviews are a guide, but only if the reviewer is knowledgeable and full of understanding; moreover, does he give an adequate account of the "argument" of the book? (I follow the *Saturday Review of Literature*, the *New York Times*, Sunday edition, and the *Christian Century*.)

(2) Better than book reviews are your own trips to a good library to examine two to four dozen books per trip. After several trips of that sort your list of books to buy, sometime, soon will be in process of growth.

(3) Best of all, probably, is the recommendation of someone you know and respect for his knowledge of books of eminence in any given field. How many books are in my own library on the recommendation of Lynn Harold Hough, surely the most widely read man that I know—especially books on Greece and the Greeks!

(4) Finally, a good way to find clues to books worth owning is to watch the footnotes in a book of immense importance that you are reading, to note the source books from which that book was written. Discrimination is in order here, but all buying of books ought to be done with cunning. With the best care in the world, some unworthy books will get shelf room in your library. (My own library has in it 2,500 volumes; 500 of them verge on being trash, as I now see it.)

Lack of money, and consequent inability to own books, is no alibi for not reading. Libraries abound everywhere, and books from them cost nothing. Even if your community has no library adequate for your needs, what about your denominational library, such as the Congregational Ministers' Library in Boston, or your state library, or the Library of Congress

in Washington, D. C.? Return postage is all it will cost at any of these libraries.

### V. A READING LIST

The following list of books is not a one-year's reading program. Most of these books are for study and ought not to be read swiftly. They are "structural" books to be depended on as solid supports for a minister's library in process of erection.

#### 1. Comprehensive Survey Books

René Sédillot: *The History of the World in Three Hundred Pages.*

Henry Osborn Taylor: *Ancient Ideals; The Medieval Mind; Thought and Expression in the Sixteenth Century.*

Crane Brinton: *Ideas and Men.*

Charles Norris Cochrane: *Christianity and Classical Culture* (from Augustus to Augustine).

Arnold J. Toynbee: *A Study of History* (six volumes; three more to come soon. Read the very able one-volume Toynbee by Sommervell only if it will not tempt you not to tackle the six volumes!).

#### 2. On America

Charles and Mary Beard: *The Rise of American Civilization.*

Van Wyck Brooks: *The World of Washington Irving; The Times of Melville and Whitman; The Confident Years; The Flowering of New England; New England Indian Summer.*

James Truslow Adams: *The Epic of America.*

Henry Steele Commager: *The American Mind* (hard on preachers, but fair).

Alexis de Tocqueville: *Democracy in America* (persistently contemporaneous).

#### 3. On Theology

W. R. Sorley: *Moral Values and the Idea of God.*

William Temple: *Nature, Man and God.*

Reinhold Niebuhr: *The Nature and Destiny of Man.*

Emil Brunner: *Christianity and Civilization.*

W. E. Hocking: *The Meaning of God in Human Experience.*

#### 4. On Psychology

William James: *Varieties of Religious Experience.*

Gordon Allport: *Personality, a Psychological Interpretation; The Individual and His Religion.*

Floyd Allport: *Social Psychology.*

Karen Horney: *The Neurotic Personality of Our Time; Our Inner Conflicts; Self-Analysis; Neurosis and Human Growth.*

Franz Alexander: *Studies in Psychosomatic Medicine; Fundamentals of Psychoanalysis.*

Walter B. Cannon: *The Wisdom of the Body.*

J. A. Hadfield: *Psychology and Morals.*

Gregory Zilboorg: *Mind, Medicine and Man.*

**5. Devotional**

William Law: *A Serious Call to a Devout and Holy Life* (indispensable for the beginner).

François Fénelon: *Meditations for Every Day of the Month* (very, very useful).

St. Francis de Sales: *Introduction to the Devout Life* (wordy, but excellent).

J. H. Oldham: *A Devotional Diary* (superb).

Pascal: *Les Pensées*.

St. Augustine: *Confessions*.

As an "antibiotic" for excessive piety, I recommend the Benjamin Franklin of the Spanish Church: Balthasar Gracián, *The Art of Worldly Wisdom*.

**6. Of the Classics**

Dante: *The Divine Comedy*.

Goethe: *Faust*.

**7. On the Greeks**

"Christianity owes as much to Greek as it does to Hebrew culture, and perhaps more"—Dean Inge.

Werner Jaeger: *Paideia* (especially Volume I. The idea of Greek culture, or culture with a purpose. A "must" book).

Plato: *The Republic; The Laws*. ("Civilization is one long exposition of Plato"—Whitehead.)

Aristotle: *Ethics; Politics; Poetics*.

One poet-dramatist; I prefer Euripides.

**8. On Shakespeare**

George L. Kittredge: *Shakespeare* (a one-volume edition of the Plays and Sonnets. The introductory pages to the plays are excellent, for all their brevity).

A. C. Bradley: *Shakespearean Tragedy*.

Donald Stauffer: *Shakespeare's World of Images* (the development of his moral ideas).

Caroline Haddon Spurgeon: *Shakespeare's Imagery*.

A. T. Cadoux: *Shakespearean Selves and Other Selves* (invaluable to the preacher).

**9. All of One Poet**

My nomination is: Edwin Arlington Robinson: *Collected Works*.

Ellsworth Barnard: *Edwin Arlington Robinson, A Critical Study*.

Charles Cestre: *An Introduction to Edwin Arlington Robinson*.

**10. Essays**

Ralph Waldo Emerson: *Essays*. (When I hear three sneers for Emerson, I always think of Byron's famous epigram and refashion it to my purpose: Long after Emerson is forgotten, those who sneer at him will be remembered—and not until then.)

C. A. Sainte-Beuve: *Causeries de Lundi*. (You can get it in English, under that title.)

Montaigne: *Essays* (compulsory reading for every preacher past forty!).

Seneca: *Moral Essays*.

Paul Valéry: *Variety*.

Paul Elmer More: *Shelburne Essays*.

### 11. Novels

Read only the best; beware the book clubs.

Tolstoi: *War and Peace*.

Herman Melville: *Moby Dick*.

Thomas Mann: *Joseph and His Brothers* (especially the volume, *Young Joseph*).

Marcel Proust: *Remembrance of Things Past*.

Pearl Buck: *The Good Earth*.

### 12. Biography

When your mind is as dull as a doormat, read biography.

Catherine Drinker Bowen: *John Adams and the American Revolution*.

Esther Forbes: *Paul Revere and the World He Lived In*.

Lord Charnwood: *Abraham Lincoln*.

G. H. Lewes: *Life of Goethe*.

Perry Miller: *Jonathan Edwards*.

Samuel Johnson: *Lives of the Poets* (bristles with insights).

James Boswell: *The Life of Samuel Johnson* (the first and still the best).

Plutarch: *Lives* (factually inaccurate; deadly accurate spiritually).

Crane Brinton: *The Lives of Talleyrand*.

These are nine of my favorites, but the woods are full of other game. Good hunting!

### 13. Autobiography

Gives even better insight than biography.

Albert Schweitzer: *Out of My Life and Thought*.

Augustine: *Confessions* (in a class by itself; the first autobiography).

John Wesley: *Journals*.

George Borrow: *The Bible in Spain*. (Much about Spain, more about George Borrow, indirectly, and nothing about the Bible.)

Henri-Frédéric Amiel: *Journal*.

John Stuart Mill: *Autobiography* (a classic).

Jawaharlal Nehru: *Toward Freedom*. (A great book; tedious at times, but great. And what English!)

### 14. All of one man

Some ministers like to read all of one man. I nominate Lewis Mumford as the one man, currently.

Lewis Mumford: *The Story of Utopias*; *Sticks and Stones*; *Golden Day*; *Brown Decades*; *Herman Melville*; *Technics and Civilization*; *The Culture of Cities*; *The Condition of Man*; *The Conduct of Life*.

### 15. On Science

Lancelot Hogben: *Science for the Citizen*.

A. N. Whitehead: *Science and the Modern World*.

Sir W. C. Dampier: *The History of Science*.

Bertrand Russell: *Religion and Science*.

Herbert Butterfield: *The Origins of Modern Science*.

About nuclear physics the minister ought to know, if for no other reason than that his parishioners, especially his high-school students, know about it.

#### 16. Sociology and Economics

Max Weber: *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Protestantism*.

Ernest W. Burgess: *Personality and the Social Group*.

C. Wright Mills: *White Collar*.

Henry Pratt Fairchild: *Economics for the Millions*.

George Soule: *Ideas of the Great Economists*.

#### 17. The most beautiful book I ever read

Louis Hémon: *Maria Chapdelaine*.

#### 18. Miscellaneous, but very important

Lucretius: *On the Nature of Things*.

Longinus: *On the Sublime*.

Jacob Burckhardt: *The Civilization of the Renaissance in Italy; Force and Freedom*.

Friedrich von Hügel: *Essays and Addresses*.

Bernard Bosanquet: *What Religion Is*.

Sir James Frazer: *The Golden Bough* (one-volume edition).

Albert Schweitzer: *The Decay and the Restoration of Civilization; Civilization and Ethics*.

Miguel de Unamuno: *The Tragic Sense of Life*.

Herbert Butterfield: *History and Human Relations; Christianity and History*.

F. S. C. Northrop: *The Taming of the Nations* (to the minister the most important book I know on international relations).

A concluding word: When you read, by all means make notes, especially from books that are not your own; your own you can underscore. At thirty this will seem a painful chore; at fifty it will have become an act of superior wisdom. Thus you will be creating your own intimately personal "little library."

# "Compel Them to Come In"

The History of Luke 14:23

FREDERICK A. NORWOOD

*"And the master said to the servant, 'Go out to the highways and hedges, and compel people to come in, that my house may be filled.'"*

## I. CONTEXT OF LUKE 14:23

ONE OF THE MOST interesting—and terrifying—examples of the use of the Bible to justify persecution is the verse taken from the parable of the great banquet in Luke 14:15-24. In this story a man once gave a dinner, to which he invited many who for one reason or another excused themselves. One had bought a field which he had to inspect; another had bought five yoke of oxen which he had to examine; a third had the best excuse of all: he had just been married. The man thereupon told his servant: "Go out quickly to the streets and lanes of the city, and bring in the poor and maimed and blind and lame." But, since there was still room, the man told his servant: "Go out to the highways and hedges, and compel people to come in, that my house may be filled."<sup>1</sup>

Taken literally, the parable would refer to successive invitations to (1) the leaders, (2) the poor and socially inept (in streets and lanes), (3) outsiders (in highways and hedges). Understood allegorically, the three groups are resolved into (1) the Jews who keep the Law, (2) the publicans and sinners, (3) the Gentiles.<sup>2</sup> The key passage is verse 23. What does "compel them" mean? ἀνάγκασον, as it is used in the New Testament, means

<sup>1</sup> Ἐξέλθε εἰς τὰς ὁδοὺς καὶ φραγμοὺς, καὶ ἀνάγκασον εἰσελθεῖν, ἵνα γεμισθῇ ὁ οἶκος μου.

<sup>2</sup> Modern commentators agree generally on the interpretation. Cf. *The Interpreter's Bible* (Abingdon-Cokesbury, 1951), VIII, 254-58; Alfred Plummer, *The Gospel According to St. Luke* (*International Critical Commentary*, 1900, 3rd ed., 590 pp.), 359-63; William Manson, *The Gospel of Luke* (*The Moffatt New Testament Commentary*, 1930, 282 pp.), 171-2; Theodor Zahn, *Kommentar zum Neuen Testament* (Leipzig, 1920), III, 549. Roman Catholic commentators give similar interpretations, with some interesting features. Bernard Orchard, *et al.*, *A Catholic Commentary on Holy Scripture* (T. Nelson & Sons, 1953), 959: "God wills good to men and his benevolent design will be accepted whatever obstacles wicked men put in the way." Also, Ronald Knox, *A New Testament Commentary for English Readers* (Sheed & Ward, 1952). The superficial similarity of this passage with Matthew 22:1-10 is of no importance here, since the crucially important 23rd verse is absent.

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"persuade," not "force." One may be "compelled" by the force of argument, but never by the force of secular arms.<sup>3</sup> At this point begins a most fascinating series of interpretations and applications that leads down through history to the brink of the Inquisition, then beyond to the Reformation and modern times. Rarely has a passage of Scripture been so completely distorted over so long a span of time as the command, "Compel them to come in." This paper seeks, not exhaustively but by significant selection, to trace the manner of interpretation from early times down to the present, in relation to the doctrine of enforced conformity in religion. This particular passage merits attention because of its frequent occurrence in the commentaries and writings of the churchmen and especially because of the unique use of it made by Augustine of Hippo.

## II. IN THE EARLY CHURCH

As one might expect, the Ante-Nicene writers found little use for this command, "Compel them." Christians before 311 were among those compelled, not to the true faith but away from it. Of necessity any thought of compulsion within the fellowship was interpreted as meaning moral or intellectual argument. At the beginning of the third century Tertullian undertook to refute, in five books, the heretical teachings of Marcion. In this context he introduced the parable in Luke to show that the same God must have issued all the invitations, to the Jews through the Old Testament, and to the Gentiles.<sup>4</sup> In the course of his argument he showed no tendency to emphasize the phrase "compel them." He was concerned to point out that, although there were plenty of people left in the city, the third invitation went into the "highways and hedges," i.e., the Gentile "strangers."

Of central importance is the interpretation given in several places by Augustine. With him lies prime responsibility for the distorted application that affected not only medieval Roman Catholics but some of the great leaders of the Reformation as well. He pointed out, in his work on the *Correction of the Donatists*,<sup>5</sup> the difference between invitation and compulsion. He said that the guests were first invited and then compelled. The latter means more than the force of miracles, for these the Jews had in the first invitation. Going into the highways and hedges means going to heretics and schismatics.

<sup>3</sup> On this see Zahn, *Kommentar*, III, 549, especially note 44; Plummer, 363. Other occurrences in the New Testament: Mt. 14:22, Mk. 6:45.

<sup>4</sup> *The Five Books against Marcion*, Bk. IV, ch. xxxi (*Ante-Nicene Fathers*, III, 401-02).

<sup>5</sup> Ch. vi (*Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*, 1st series (hereafter PNF<sup>1</sup>), IV, 642).

One of the key references in Augustine is his sermon on this parable.<sup>6</sup> The man who gave the dinner was "the Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus" (1 Tim. 2:5). The first invitation was old and of long standing, issued by the Prophets to the Jews. Of the excuses given, land signifies dominion and pride, the five oxen mean the five senses that distract us, and marriage is lust. The second invitation was more recent, and was given to the Gentiles, who lived in the streets and lanes of the city. The third invitation, therefore, which was less invitation than command, has gone to the heretics, who are to be compelled to come in.

Whom thou shalt find wait not till they choose to come, compel them to come in. I have prepared a great supper, a great house, I cannot suffer any place to be vacant in it. The Gentiles came from the streets and lanes: Let the heretics come from the hedges, here they shall find peace. For those who make the hedges, let them be plucked up from among the thorns. They have stuck fast in the hedges, they are unwilling to be compelled. Let us come in, they say, of our own good will. This is not the Lord's order, "Compel them," saith he, "to come in." Let compulsion be found outside, the will will arise within.<sup>7</sup>

Augustine had not always felt this way. In a letter to Vincentius he explained that at one time he had opposed the use of force in matters of faith. But the evidence of the facts, as illustrated by his relations with the Donatists, has forced him to change his mind.<sup>8</sup> His own town was strongly Donatist; but through fear of the imperial power it was now Catholic. He then launched into a long defense of the authority of the church as over against the opinions of individuals. Of the church it is said, "As the lily among thorns, so is my love among the daughters" (Song of Solomon 2:2). Hence, in matters of faith, all must take guidance from the church. "You are of the opinion," Augustine wrote earlier in the same letter, "that no one should be compelled to follow righteousness; and yet you read that the householder said to his servants, 'Whomsoever ye shall find, compel them to come in.'"<sup>9</sup> He continued his argument with citations from the Old and New Testaments illustrating the use of compulsion by both evil and good men, the evil to damage, the good to correct by discipline. "Better are the wounds of a friend than the proffered kisses of an enemy" (Proverbs 27:6).

<sup>6</sup> Sermon 62, *PNF*<sup>1</sup>, VI, 446ff. This is found in Migne, *Pat. Lat.*, Vol. 38, pp. 643-7, as No. 112.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, 449. In Migne, 647: "Quos inveneris, ut dignentur, noli expectare; coge intrare. Magnam coenam, magnam domum paravi, non ibi patior locum vacare. Venerunt de plateis et vicis Gentes: veniant de sepibus haeretici, hic inveniunt pacem. Nam qui construunt sepes, divisiones quaerunt. Trahantur a sepibus, evelantur ab spinis. In sepibus haeserunt, cogi nolunt. Voluntate, inquit, nostra intremus. Non hoc Dominus imperavit: Coge, inquit, intrare. Foris inveniatur necessitas, nascitur intus voluntas."

<sup>8</sup> No. 93, to Vincentius, 408 (*PNF*<sup>1</sup>, I, 388ff.).

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, 383.

Later, in 416, Augustine wrote to Donatus himself.<sup>10</sup> Donatus he quoted as resenting his arrest because "no one should be compelled to that which is good." Augustine's answer was, "In so far as power is given, they ought to be both prevented from evil and compelled to good." As Solomon had enjoined (Prov. 23:14), "Thou shalt beat him with a rod and shall deliver his soul from hell." "For it is better for us to obey the will of the Lord, who charges us to compel you to return to his fold, than to yield consent to the will of the wandering sheep, so as to leave you to perish." In turning to his favorite passage, the parable in Luke 14, he made the point that at first the guests were to be "brought in," and then later "compelled"—"by which was signified the incipient condition of the Church, when it was only growing toward the position in which it would have strength to compel men to come in." Now that the church has that strength, it has the duty to compel unwilling guests to the "feast of everlasting salvation." "The sheep which is compelled is driven whither it would not wish to go, but after it has entered, it feeds of its own accord in the pastures to which it was brought."<sup>11</sup>

From these sermons and letters the position of Augustine is made clear. No man has a right freely to believe as he wishes, because he may believe wrongly. God wills that the church, in order to identify and protect the true faith, should compel men to believe rightly. Compulsion is understood as physical, if necessary, involving the use of political authority and the power of the state to punish crimes. Heresy is a crime, the worst of all conceivable crimes. One who conspires against the ruler is a traitor. How much worse he who conspires against God! One who murders his own mother is hateful. How much worse he who would destroy Mother Church! To kill the body is worthy of death. How much more to kill the eternal soul! Compel the little foxes to come in, therefore, lest they destroy the sheep in the Lord's fold. In varying forms and with varying degrees of success this doctrine became normative for the medieval church, found its most efficient embodiment in the Inquisition, and has continued a powerful influence in the thinking of the Roman church to this day.

Use of Luke 14:15ff. by the other writers of the early church was infrequent. In his *Two Books Concerning Repentance*, written against Novatian, Ambrose quoted verse 21 to the effect that we should go into

<sup>10</sup> No. 173, to Donatus, 416 (PNF<sup>1</sup>, I, 544ff.).

<sup>11</sup> The *Catholic Encyclopedia*, in the article, "Inquisition," states that three factors may have brought Augustine to change his mind: (1) excesses of the Circumcellians, (2) the example of success from the use of force, (3) arguments of other bishops. In this article no mention is made of the use to which he put Luke 14:23.

the streets and gather in both good and bad. But the element of compulsion is absent, replaced by the statement that the Lord will make worthy all whom he calls.<sup>12</sup> In his commentary on Luke he identified the recipients of the second and third invitations as Gentiles and sinners without distinguishing between them. Again no compulsion.<sup>13</sup> Among the eastern writers Chrysostom set forth the most distinctive interpretation. In one of his homilies he rejected the idea of compelling men to good. "Unto hell He sends many against their will, but unto the kingdom he calls willing minds."<sup>14</sup> A little further he added, "But it is impossible that one should ever be good by necessity." In the eastern tradition generally, however, little interest in the relation of the parable to persecution is shown.<sup>15</sup>

### III. IN THE MIDDLE AGES

Most churchmen of the Middle Ages followed the allegorical method. Since the allegorization of the parable of the banquet had already taken form, and since most writers of this period had a profound, sometimes slavish, respect for the authority of the "Fathers," the contribution of commentators between 500 and 1500 was mainly embellishment of the interpretations of Augustine and others. A work of the early Middle Ages falsely attributed to Jerome will illustrate the method.<sup>16</sup> The man who gives the feast is God the Father. The banquet itself is the Gospel. The many who are called are the Jews. The servant is Christ. The land bought by one of the reluctant guests signifies avarice; the yoke of oxen, pride or the five senses or the five books of Moses; the wife, lust. The poor, halt, etc., recipients of the second invitation, are publicans and sinners. The third invitation, sent to those in the highways, goes to the Gentiles. The phrase "compel them" is said in this work to mean "*per confessionem*"—by witness and argument.

The most important and influential source for the medieval interpretation of the story, however, is found in the commentaries of Pope Gregory the Great.<sup>17</sup> Almost all of the commentaries of the first half of the Middle Ages used the material of Gregory. In fact, here is an excellent example

<sup>12</sup> Ch. vii (PNF<sup>2</sup>, X, 334).

<sup>13</sup> *Expositio Evangelii secundum Lucam* (Migne, Pat. Lat., Vol. 15, 1753-54, on verses 21-23).

<sup>14</sup> Homily II, on 1 Cor. 1:4-5 (PNF<sup>1</sup>, XII, 8f.). In this passage he does not directly quote Luke 14:23.

<sup>15</sup> Gregory Nazianzen used the story in his oration on Holy Baptism without referring to the 23rd verse at all. PNF<sup>2</sup>, VII, 377.

<sup>16</sup> Migne, Pat. Lat., Vol. 30, 574. This was apparently the work of M. V. Strabo (*Ibid.*, 531, note on this commentary on the New Testament).

<sup>17</sup> *Homilies on the Gospels*, No. 36 (Migne, Pat. Lat., Vol. 76, 1265ff.). One of Gregory's disciples expounded Luke without reference to the feast at all (*Ibid.*, Vol. 79).

of the uses of plagiarism. No less than four churchmen—the Venerable Bede, Paul the Deacon, Abbot Smaragdus, and Rabanus Maurus—copied either from him or from each other.<sup>18</sup> In his homily on the subject Gregory identified the host as Christ himself. Land means worldly goods, the five yoke of oxen the five senses, and the wife, lust. The poor and crippled represent repentant sinners: "*Sed peccatores superbi respuuntur, ut peccatores humiles eliguntur.*"<sup>19</sup> This phrase is among the many copied verbatim by later writers. The pope expatiated at greater length than Bede, who abridged the treatment considerably, but nevertheless followed him closely and verbally.<sup>20</sup>

On Luke 14:23 the interpretation of these writers emphasized that the third invitation was not phrased "invite" but rather "compel." Some people must be forced, as it were, to follow the path of righteousness. They either languish from long sickness or decay from injuries, or are afflicted by more serious punishments, and are thus turned to God. If these, moved by the adversities of this world, are brought to the love of God, are they not "compelled to come in"? One does not find here the explicit statement that the church or the state is actively to enforce orthodoxy with the sword; but this is the sense in which it was generally understood.

Among the other churchmen who commented on the parable in Luke little that is new is found. Haymo, bishop of Halberstadt in the ninth century, explained in his one-hundred-and-twelfth homily that the host is God, who holds a banquet for his elect.<sup>21</sup> Those who were compelled to come in from the highways and hedges are the Gentiles who were converted only after punishment. The argument was fortified with quotations from the Old Testament favoring compulsion. A distinctive contribution was made by Abbot Werner in the twelfth century. He stated that in the feast three types of invitation are found: (1) by God (by inspiration, as with Abraham), (2) by men (through saints and preachers), (3) by necessity (from fear of death).<sup>22</sup> Otherwise his text follows that of Bishop Haymo. Those compelled to come in are sinners and heretics, punished by the church. Anselm of Canterbury compared the three invitations with three eras: before the Law, under the Law, and under Grace. The second invita-

<sup>18</sup> Bede, *Exposition of Luke* (Migne, *Pat. Lat.*, Vol. 92, 301ff., especially 514ff.); Paul the Deacon (*Ibid.*, Vol. 95, 1363); Smaragdus (*Ibid.*, Vol. 102, 357); R. Maurus (*Ibid.*, Vol. 110, 305). In addition, a homily falsely attributed to Bede contains the same passage (*Ibid.*, Vol. 94, 274).

<sup>19</sup> Migne, *Pat. Lat.*, Vol. 76, 1269. Cf. 1 Cor. 1:27-28.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, Vol. 92, 516.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, Vol. 118, 601ff., especially 607-08. Cf. Rad. Ardens, in Vol. 155, 1969ff.

<sup>22</sup> *Deformationes SS. Patrum*, Lib. II (Migne, *Pat. Lat.*, Vol. 157, 1015 [erroneous pagination gives 1115]).



tion already included the Gentiles, while the third pertained especially to "our times," which were those of affliction.<sup>23</sup> The contributions of other medieval writers, with the exception of the Cistercian Bernard and the Dominican Thomas, appear to have contained little new.<sup>24</sup>

St. Bernard was not only the advocate of the mystical love of God, but also the unbending scourge of heretics. Although he did not refer specifically to Luke 14:23 in his sermons on the Song of Solomon, he did comment on it indirectly in his sixty-fourth and sixty-sixth sermons, dealing with the "little foxes" (Song of Sol. 2:15).<sup>25</sup> Of heretics he wrote, "*Capiantur, dico, non armis, sed argumentis.*" Let them be brought in not by force but by persuasion—*unless* they threaten to lead others into error. It is better that they be coerced than that many others should be led to heresy through them. Bernard seems here to justify force not so much for the benefit of the heretics themselves as for the benefit to society through quarantine.

The full import of these various interpretations is brought to a focus in the definitive work of Thomas Aquinas, who completes a full circle, back to the original emphasis of Augustine. In his *Summa Theologica* he undertook to answer the question, "Whether unbelievers ought to be compelled to the faith?"<sup>26</sup> He first referred to objections, quoting Matthew 13:30 (parable of the grain and weeds—"Let both grow together until the harvest"). He answered on the contrary, quoting Luke 14:23. Those who had never received the faith, he maintained, should not be compelled. But even they must be coerced if they interfere in any way with the true faith. This would justify holy war against unbelievers. Of those who have received the faith, "such should be submitted even to bodily compulsion, that they may fulfil what they have promised, and hold what they, at one time, received." This would apply to all heretics. He proceeded on the principle that the making of a vow is a matter of will, while the keeping of it is a matter of obligation. It should be especially noted that Thomas specifically quoted from Augustine's letter to Vincentius to the effect that practical success had changed his mind on the advisability of compulsion.

<sup>23</sup> Homily 11 (*Ibid.*, Vol. 158, 651ff.).

<sup>24</sup> Bishop Bruno (*Ibid.*, Vol. 165) said all the Jews were invited before the Incarnation, and interpreted the other invitations in terms of Acts 13:46, "then we turn to the Gentiles." Also Abbot Godefridus, Homily 61 (*Ibid.*, Vol. 174, 415ff.).

<sup>25</sup> In *Cantica* (*Ibid.*, Vol. 183, 1086, 1101). "Approbamus zelum, sed factum non suademus; quia fides suadenda est, non inponenda. Quanquam melius procul dubio gladio coercentur, illius videlicet qui non sine causa gladium portat, quam in suum errorem multos trajicere permittantur."

<sup>26</sup> *Summa Theologica* (London, 1937, 21 vols.), Pt. II, Question X, Art. 8, p. 133ff.



Then Thomas took up the question "Of heresy."<sup>27</sup> In refutation of arguments in favor of toleration he quoted Titus 3:10-11, advising avoidance of a heretic after two warnings, and Galatians 5:9, "A little yeast leavens the lump," in defense of the death penalty against heretics, who can spoil the whole body and spirit. He quoted Jerome: "Cut off the decayed flesh, expel the mangy sheep from the fold . . . ." Heretics deserve, on account of their great sin, "not only to be separated from the Church by excommunication, but also to be severed from the world by death." By reason of her mercy the church gives two warnings. After that, if the case is hopeless, for the salvation of others the heretic is to be punished "by excommunicating and separating him from the Church, and furthermore delivers him to the secular tribunal to be exterminated thereby from the world by death." At this point, then, stemming from the medieval interpretation of the thought of Augustine, who himself centered his argument on Luke 14:23, arises the scriptural and theological justification of that tribunal already full of vigor in Aquinas' day—the Holy Office of Inquisition. For in 1233 had been formally instituted the Papal Inquisition, armed with the plenipotentiary authority of the church and zealously promoted by the Order of Dominican Friars, the *Domini Canes*—the hounds of God. Henceforth, let the little foxes beware!

#### IV. IN THE REFORMATION

In turning from the medieval Catholic to the Protestant writers of the Reformation one would hope to note a change in attitude, at least toward the significance of Luke 14:23. Such, unfortunately, is not the case. With the exception—of all people—of Martin Luther, all of the major reformers were in complete agreement with the church of Rome on the doctrine of enforced conformity in religion, and all made the same use of the parable in Luke. And even Luther was forced to compromise his original principles in the face of the Zwickau radicals and the Peasants' War. He was not, however, so confident of the effectiveness of coercion in achieving the purpose to which it was directed.<sup>28</sup> He wondered what good would be accomplished by killing the Anabaptists. It is better to let people err than to force them to lie. On the other hand, Luther tried ineffectively to make a distinction between heresy and blasphemy or sedition. Only the latter crimes, against God and the state, were punishable

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*, Question XI, pp. 148-58.

<sup>28</sup> Bainton, Roland H., *The Travail of Religious Liberty* (The Westminster Press, 1951, 272 pp.), especially 59ff.; and *idem*, *Here I Stand* (The Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, 1950, 422 pp.), give the general attitude of Luther to religious liberty.

by death. In practice they were made to cover most forms of heresy. He also tried to make a distinction between heresy as simply incorrect opinion and heresy that led to social revolt.

When one turns to Luther's treatment of the passage from Luke 14, much is familiar. He used the phrase, "*nöttige sie hereyn zu komen*," in his German translation of the New Testament. The verb can be understood as "press" with reference to a guest. In his commentaries Luther used the verb "*zwingen*," which carries clearly the note of compulsion, even violence. In the 1530's he preached two sermons on the text of Luke 14: 15-24, in which he followed the traditional application of the three invitations to Jews, publicans and sinners, and Gentiles.<sup>29</sup> Of the third, who are drawn from the highways and hedges, he asked, "How does one compel [*zwinget*] them?" This means, said Luther, to persuade by preaching the fear of death, "not, like the Papists, with the ban."<sup>30</sup> Of the three groups invited, only the last is compelled to come in.<sup>31</sup> But this compulsion is not to be by the sword. The true Christian does not bring people in by force, as do the Turks and Papists with their ungodly persecution.<sup>32</sup>

Philip Melanchthon followed Luther in his interpretation of the Lucan story. In his *Annotationes in Evangelia* he stated that, although Christ was not speaking of corporal force, still the magistrate has the authority, pertaining to external discipline, to punish manifest depravity and idolatry.<sup>33</sup>

Although the author has not located specific references to Luke 14:23 in the works of Huldreich Zwingli, his general attitude toward heresy and religious liberty leads one to assume he would agree with his successor in Zürich, Henry Bullinger, who, in writing to Lelius Socinus on the death of Servetus, said: "St. Augustine himself at first deemed it wicked to use violence toward heretics, and tried to win them back by the mere word of God. But finally, learning wisdom by experience, he began to use force with good effect."<sup>34</sup> He then went on to say how the Lutherans had at first opposed force, then, after the excesses of the Anabaptists, had decided that the magistrate had authority to restrain and punish.

<sup>29</sup> *Luther's Werke* (Weimar Ausgabe), XLIV, 289ff., Sermon for May 30, 1535; XLVI, 440ff, for June 23, 1538.

<sup>30</sup> *Werke*, XLIV, 290: "Das heist noetigen, nemlich mit der sunde schrecken, nicht, wie der Papst noetiget mit dem Bann. . ."

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*, XLVI, 441: "Die Ersten komen nicht, die andern komen, Die dritten werden gezwungen zu komen."

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*, 448-9: "Das zwingen ghet nicht mit schwerd zu." "Petrus oder dieser knecht hat die leut nicht mit dem Schwert hinein getrieben, wie der Turck unnd Bapst zu ihrer abgotterey treybenn mit dem Schwert. Petrus wolt ein mal drein schlahenn, hies ihn Christus einstecken. Treiben heist weisen. . ."

<sup>33</sup> *Corpus Reformatorum, Mel. Opera*, XIV, 304.

<sup>34</sup> Quoted in E. Vacandard, *The Inquisition* (London, 1908, 284 pp.), 223.

Of all the reformers, John Calvin won the highest reputation as a persecutor, largely as a result of his relations with Castellio and Servetus. His commentary on Luke 14, therefore, is of supreme importance. In interpreting the great feast he considered the invitations not as directed to separate groups, but rather as issued at separate times. Yet the Jews received the invitation first, then the Gentiles.<sup>35</sup> He was most candid in his exposition of the twenty-third verse. God, he said, first freely invites us, then entreats us, then finally "compels us by threatenings to draw near to him." "At the same time, I do not disapprove of the use which Augustine frequently made of this passage against the Donatists, to prove that godly princes may lawfully issue edicts, for compelling obstinate and rebellious persons to worship the true God, and to maintain the unity of the faith; for, though faith is voluntary, yet we see that such methods are useful for subduing the obstinacy of those who will not yield until they are compelled." Faith cannot be compelled, but the obstinacy that prevents faith may be removed by compulsion. One may wonder how this attitude accords with Calvin's doctrine of grace.

As a result of the execution at the stake in Geneva of Michael Servetus on the charge and conviction of heretical beliefs regarding the Trinity and baptism, Sebastian Castellio wrote a famous defense of religious freedom entitled, *Concerning Heretics, Whether They Are to Be Persecuted and How They Are to Be Treated*. Here he wrote: "Our opponents quote the text, 'Compel them to come in.' Yes, but with the sword of the Spirit (at least if the marriage is spiritual), that is, with powerful, living, divine words. By the Word the heavens visible and invisible were made. To seek to create a new creature with anything other than the Word of God is to turn upside down the creation of the world."<sup>36</sup>

## V. IN MODERN TIMES

Between the sixteenth and the eighteenth centuries at least three major factors changed the attitudes of men to religious freedom, and consequently to the verse being traced in this paper. One of them affected Roman Catholicism, two were operative among Protestants, and all three were present in English religious history. The one force effective in all three areas was the Enlightenment and its religious aspect, Deism. To this must be added Pietism among Protestants in many parts of Europe.

<sup>35</sup> *Commentary on a Harmony of the Evangelists* (Edinburgh, 1845, 3 vols.), II, 170ff. Calvin explained this parable in comparison with the similar story in Mt. 22:1-14.

<sup>36</sup> Edited and translated by R. H. Bainton in *Columbia University Records of Civilization* (Columbia University Press, 1935, 342 pp.), 246.

In England alone was a third, and perhaps most important, factor, Puritanism. As a result of the interworking of these powerful principles, the struggle for religious freedom was, in a measure and for a time, won.<sup>37</sup> Indeed, so general was the spirit of toleration, and so complete the victory, that generations of educated people in the nineteenth century and on to our day have assumed that the case is closed, and that the specters of bigotry, intolerance, and persecution are laid away for all time. Thus are men of good will bemused in all ages.

With the rise of historical study of the Bible in the eighteenth century, in part a manifestation of the Enlightenment, a new approach was made to such passages as that traced in this paper, passages hoary with the accumulated barnacles of tradition, allegory, mystical, typical, and moral senses, and proof-text execution. Only a few of the exemplars of the new view may be consulted here. One of the earliest was Matthew Henry, a non-conformist divine and commentator who died in 1714. In his *Exposition of the Old and New Testaments*, done in 1708-10, one finds much of the traditional understanding of Luke 14.<sup>38</sup> The Jews, invited first, rejected the opportunity and thereby lost their chance, being now *forbidden* to attend. Those bidden the third time are not forced to come, only persuaded.

In the next generation Philip Doddridge (d. 1751) pursued a down-to-earth path of biblical interpretation that became at times downright amorphous.<sup>39</sup> "It argues a wrong Taste in Criticism," said he, "to torture every Circumstance into a fancied Resemblance." That principle was especially applicable to the parable in Luke. As he explained 14:23: "And if Importunity be necessary to such, press them that you find thereby the most earnest Invitation to come in. . . ." In a note he referred to and rejected Augustine's interpretation, and took care to explain the meaning of ἀνάγκασον.

John Wesley followed the same line of emphasis in his *Explanatory Notes upon the New Testament*.<sup>40</sup> As he put it, one must overwhelm the opponent "with all the violence of love, and the force of God's word. Such compulsion, and such only, in matters of religion, was used by Christ and his apostles." This same Wesleyan emphasis is found in the work

<sup>37</sup> An excellent recent survey based upon the major figures involved is Roland H. Bainton, *The Travail of Religious Liberty* (The Westminster Press, 1951). The standard work for England is Wilbur K. Jordan, *The Development of Religious Toleration in England* (Harvard University Press, 1932-1940, 3 vols.).

<sup>38</sup> *A Commentary on the Holy Bible* (New York, n.d., 6 vols.), V, 423-4.

<sup>39</sup> *The Family Expositor* (London, 1756, 3rd ed., 6 vols.), II, 157.

<sup>40</sup> London, 1952, 1055 pp. Especially p. 258.

of the prodigious commentator of the early nineteenth century, Adam Clarke, a Methodist preacher and scholar whose commentary in eight volumes, published between 1810 and 1826, is a landmark in biblical study.<sup>41</sup> Unwilling guests should be compelled "by the most earnest entreaties." "No other kind of constraint is ever recommended in the Gospel of Christ; every other kind of compulsion is antichristian, can only be submitted to by cowards and knaves, and can produce nothing but hypocrites."<sup>42</sup>

With the trenchant argument of Adam Clarke we have obviously reached the outlook of our own times. Over nineteen centuries Luke 14:23, originally part of a parable of our Lord concerning the nature of the kingdom of heaven, has been torn out of context and held like a sword in the hands of those who would compel men to one faith. It has played a major part in the justification of that infamous creature of the Middle Ages, the Inquisition. It was used with equal callousness by some of the most eminent leaders of the Reformation. It has entered strongly into the tradition of the Roman Catholic Church, an institution much beholden of tradition. Its baleful influence seems in our day to have dissipated, rendered harmless by a more enlightened and scientific study of the Scriptures. One wonders, however, how thoroughly dead are the impulse to suppress and the urge to persecute. Wherever bigotry, ignorance, fanaticism, totalitarianism flourish, there abides the specter of the Inquisition. And writ large upon the brow of that ghostly apparition is the fateful phrase, "Compel them to come in."

<sup>41</sup> *The New Testament of Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ* (New York, 1857), I, 453.

<sup>42</sup> In a long addendum (*Ibid.*, 454f.) Clarke quoted from the notes of one Dr. Dodd, who gave six reasons why persecution for religion is wrong: (1) no man has a right to judge another in religion, (2) it is inconsistent with the Golden Rule, (3) it is absurd, as it never attains its purpose, (4) creates confusion and trouble, (5) truth runs counter to persecution, (6) contrary to the whole tenor of the New Testament.

# Character Education à la Mode

ROBERT E. FITCH

WITH ALL OUR TALK these days about character education, there is just one little item we have failed to clarify: what is the Christian ideal of character? And, in connection with this, what are the courses of training in character to which men and women are really subjected in our society?

Actually the secular world offers four varieties of discipline in character. In our elementary and secondary schools I think it is still fair to say that the prevailing ideal is romanticism, with its stress on the sanctity of the self. In the colleges and universities the ideal is rationalism, with an emphasis on the dignity of reason. In the business world the philosophy is materialism, with its idolatry of prosperity and of security. In the armed forces, which are now a school for most of our young men, there is a sort of Stoic ethics of duty. Each of these ideals clashes harshly with the rest. And it is matter for ironic merriment that, with all our current passion in education for making easy and painless the transition from one stage to another, we actually subject our people to several abrupt and violent changes of curriculum. Out of this experience modern man emerges, not with just one psychic trauma, but probably with three or four.

When Christian nurture in the church and in the educational institutions of the church is insufficiently aware of its objective, it plays an ambiguous role in this situation. It would be easy to point out, for instance, specific areas where Christianity has sold out to romanticism, or to rationalism, or to materialism. And it would be interesting to interpret the peculiar repulsion which the church feels toward the primary military ethics of duty, which comes closest to its own Puritan Protestant heritage.

I propose, therefore, to examine the concrete alternatives with which we now operate, and at least to initiate the discussion of what the Christian ideal of character education may be in contrast with the rest.

## I. ROMANTICISM: THE SANCTITY OF THE SELF

Although John Dewey's educational philosophy is already supposed

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to be out of date, I have the feeling that it is still dominant on the elementary and secondary levels. This may not be true of some of the great traditional private schools, but it is largely true of the public schools. The important principle here is child-centered education. We are in rebellion against the objective constraints of history and of tradition, of content, and of subject matter, and we focus our attention on the needs and the potentialities of the child. To be sure, the child is to be socialized to the extent that he is able to get along with other children, but he is not to be forced into any preconceived pattern other than the pattern of an easygoing, gregarious, co-operative anarchy.

Certainly the revolution inaugurated by Dewey had its merits. It did help us to break away from a prescribed curriculum which had lost much of its relevance to the problems of the day. It served as a denial that the content of education is some sacred and self-enclosed body of doctrine to be preserved at all costs in its elegant purity and futility. It served as a reminder that what we learn in school may have a vital bearing on practical situations we confront in the course of a lifetime. With its two central categories of interest and of activity, it pointed to the effective starting point and to the significantly ongoing process of all learning. And it did assist us to some recovery of the values of freedom, spontaneity, genuineness, and creativity—of sorts.

The disvalues of this philosophy, however, are already shockingly apparent. It arrived at the point where it forgot that truly creative activity involves a large measure of painful discipline in objective skills. It helped to promote an appreciation of the more intuitive areas of music and of art, but it failed wretchedly to communicate the more rigorous techniques that are literary, linguistic, logical, grammatical, and mathematical. In turning from the study of history to the study of contemporary social problems, it cheated a whole generation of that firm grasp of the great traditions of our civilization which alone can give us strength in the time of trial. And in its fatuous exaltation of method over content, it set up as its symbol of self-realization those Foolish Virgins who were unwilling to carry oil in their lamps because they knew where to go and get it when they wanted it, and so were unready and rejected at the critical moment when opportunity knocked.

The outcome of this process of character education can best be described as an egotistical relativist. He is a relativist because he has no sense of any objective and universal standard of value, and because he really believes that it is his right in this world to think and to say and to do

as he pleases. He is an egotist because the whole curriculum has been centered on his self and on his needs, and because he has been carefully indoctrinated with the idea that the only thing in the world which is really worthy of reverence is his own precious little personality. The only kind of counseling he has received has been of a nondirective sort, uncontaminated by any categorical imperatives. And he is thrust into the world prepared to act on the sacred principle which the pediatrician laid down to his parents in rejecting the old-fashioned notion of a set schedule for feeding—namely, that the baby is to have his bottle just when and as he pleases.

## II. RATIONALISM: THE DIGNITY OF REASON

If this young romantic goes on to college, he suffers his first great psychic trauma. His college professors are frankly critical of the standards, or lack of standards, according to which he has been educated heretofore, and even express a contempt for the department of education in their own institution which has promoted such policies on the elementary and secondary levels. The college faculty seems not to care too much about the wants and interests of the self. The new focus is on the intellect. It suddenly becomes important to know, and to learn, not by doing, but by reading, and by thinking, and by laboratory experiments that have no conceivable reference to any immediate life situation.

At this point, if the student is lucky, he may experience The Great Awakening—the discovery that he has a mind. Or, with his instincts of self-preservation aroused, he may simply bull his way through the four years of college, with a tenacity that is uncomprehending though respectful of the ordeal he undergoes. Then again he may simply quit the whole business, in the self-righteous conviction that it is all designed to be a deliberate violation of his sacred little personality. This last alternative is part of the experience of at least a third of the students who enter college.

The college faculty, of course, stands in a great tradition that goes back to Socrates and Plato and Aristotle. This tradition assumes that man is a rational animal—with the emphasis not on his animality but on his rationality. It believes that all men by nature desire to know. If there are any that do not desire to know, then they are simply not to be classed as fully qualified human beings. It is the intellect that raises us above the brutes; it is the intellect that makes us akin to the gods. Curiously enough there is an important part of John Dewey which belongs in this tradition. Dewey rebelled against the formal rationalism of classical antiquity only because he wished to establish the experimental rationalism

of free, cooperative inquiry. The rationalist in John Dewey belongs to the colleges and universities, just as the romantic in Dewey belongs to the elementary and secondary schools.

Even the best college student has one legitimate gripe about his ordeal. He may come to learn and to know all that he is called upon to know. But it is inconceivable that he can really understand all that he has come to know. The irreducible fact is that college education is a process of forced feeding. The student is required to assimilate in four years a body of wisdom and of skills which it took the human race thousands of years to accumulate. He is doing on the intellectual plane what the biologists tell us he did on the physical plane in his mother's womb. The ontogeny recapitulates the phylogeny. In nine months the foetus passes through all the stages of biological evolution of its ancestors. In four years the adolescent rehearses all the stages of the spiritual and intellectual evolution of his ancestors. There may be in these few years the beginnings of understanding made luminous by an awakening intellectual curiosity, but the maturity of understanding can come only later. Let sentimentalists in education rage as they will against the artificiality of such a process; but as life is short, so must learning be swift.

Regardless of the difficulties here, it is probable that the intelligent college student, before he graduates, will have assimilated the essentials of the rationalistic belief about character. This is simply the faith that Reason is our Redeemer. Reason is adequate to explain everything. Reason is adequate to solve any problem. The way to tackle any problem is to begin by analyzing the data. The way to resolve human tensions is through rational discussion and negotiation. The way to bring about a better world is through intelligent planning. Our young bachelor of arts and of sciences will not yet suspect that in the great adventures of life—religion, politics, matrimony, and war—reason is but an imperfect weapon that is wielded by hands than are mightier than itself.

### III. MATERIALISM: PROSPERITY AND SECURITY

As our hero enters the world of business competition to continue the education of his character, he will not find this second transition quite as abrupt as the first. Because the world of business has its own sort of rationality. It may not care for pure reason, but it does care for practical reason. It may not have time for the unending lucubrations of the scholar, but it does respect the sort of intellect which is chastened by common sense to the virtue of good judgment. It has, moreover, an elaborate

ritual of rationality in its surveys, and reports, and records, and organizational structures, and plans for the future. It insists only on a slight change in the definition of the motives and of the goals of human nature. The motive is no longer the desire to know, but self-interest; the goal is no longer truth, but success and prosperity. Reason is now the servant, not the master; but, of course, the self-interest is an enlightened one, and the prosperity is rationally justifiable.

That there is an opportunity for creative achievement in this sphere, there can be no doubt. And while business enterprise always needs the criticism and the judgment of the Christian conscience, it is also deserving of a less condescending apologetic that it has normally received from the theologians. The fact is that freedom and creativity in the economic sphere developed concurrently in our modern world with freedom and diversity in the realm of the intellect and of the spirit. This simply reflects the truth of the Christian doctrine that body and soul are united in one indivisible personality. It is a preposterous teaching which declares that in society at large the freedom of the mind can exist without freedoms that are economic, and it is an arrogant teaching which suggests that the former was actually the cause of the latter. It is sensuality when man thinks he can live by bread alone; it is pride when he thinks he can despise his daily bread.

Nevertheless, the falsehoods which lie at the heart of Economic Man cannot be contained. One of these days someone must make an extended inquiry into the question as to why it is that enlightened self-interest is never enlightened. Is it due to some defect in the self that is interested, or is it due to some defect in the reason that allegedly enlightens? Why is it, indeed, that enlightened self-interest almost always becomes the pretext for a shortsighted policy that defeats reason as it frustrates the self? Moreover, the true prosperity of man can never be sufficiently defined in terms of material satisfactions. John Calvin was explicit about this matter in the *Institutes*. He saw correctly that the rational Aristotelian ethic of moderation applies very well to our use of the material benefits of life, but that the only absolute that man dare acknowledge is Almighty God.

I suspect, however, that it is gradually becoming incorrect to say that the name of our god in this cult of the golden calf is Prosperity. It begins to appear that the idol is not a bull but a cow, and that her true title nowadays is Security. This will finally be verified for us in some national election when the American people reject a presidential candidate who may promise them a higher standard of living, in favor of a candidate

who will make them feel more secure in the possession of the good things they already have. For there are signs that we begin to fear risk and adventure, and that we prefer safety. A dynamic and creative economy is always attended by the threat of catastrophe. Perhaps it would be better to settle for slow and steady progress, with the creature comforts distributed equitably according to American standards of competence. Spiritually we are already consumers rather than producers, Epicureans rather than Puritans.

#### IV. MILITARISM: THE CALL OF DUTY

Whether the experience of character education in the armed forces comes early or late in the story is of secondary importance. In any case it has an impact of shocking violence against the values previously established. It is tough on the romantic, with his precious little personality. It is tough on the rationalist, with his free, cooperative inquiry. And it is just as tough on the materialist, who suddenly finds himself in the milieu where cost and profit are secondary to military victory, and where prodigality in the accumulation and in the expenditure of resources becomes a virtue instead of a vice.

One primary feature of the military experience is the radical subordination of self to duty. The most painful lesson to be learned by the initiate is that, in his calling, no one really cares about him as a person. All that matters is his devotion to the task, and his skill in the performance of it. I found it curious to watch the dawning realization of this fact among my fellow chaplains in training during World War II. Protestant clergymen (and let us be grateful for it) are among the most incorrigible individualists in the world. They like to respect their own persons and the persons of others. But what amazed and distressed me was the perception that apparently there was little in the background of most of them that prepared them for a situation where the impersonal imperative of duty made the self of almost no account. They had not been drafted; they had chosen this calling voluntarily. Was there nothing in their own Christian discipline that fitted them for the ordeal?

Another element in military life is the experience of total commitment to an ideal. In this situation one knows clearly what is the one thing needful. All else—personal ambitions, family, friends, comforts, life itself—become expendables. Before I had worn the uniform myself I used to find ludicrous the almost fanatical nostalgia of members of the American Legion as they would commemorate their experiences in a previous war. After I had worn the uniform and then put it aside, I was able to marvel



at the sudden tautness in my body and the tension in my emotions when, at some public gathering, all turned to face the flag and to sing the national anthem. But there is no mystery here. Once a man has known what it is consciously to surrender his all for a cause, he will not ever forget it. Life does not often confront us with the challenge of a total commitment. Has our Christian faith ever really taken hold of us in this manner?

While I am unwilling to belittle the valor and the honor of those who serve their country in a cause they believe is just, I have no desire to glorify war. Certainly it is a school of character education with which we would dispense if we could. The evil in it, however, is not the simple evil on which the sentimentalists like to dwell: the evil of those who kill and are killed. Today there are more men living in slavery in forced labor camps than there were men slain in World War II. There are more minds systematically inoculated with lies and with hatred than ever before in history. And I think this evil is greater than the evil of the battlefield. But the evil of war is like this other evil in that it is ultimately a spiritual evil—the evil of desolation of the soul, of the stupidity of destruction instead of creation, of an irremediable ugliness, dreariness, tedium, and meaninglessness of existence.

#### V. CHRISTIANITY: SPIRITUAL PERSONALITY

What the Christian school of character education has to offer as an alternative to these other schools is an inquiry that ought to engage our earnest attention. For the other schools are a part of the prescribed curriculum of life for most men and women. In terms of man's will, if not in terms of God's will, Christianity is the only elective course.

No doubt it would take a full Christian doctrine of man to define the Christian alternative. Since I cannot put forth anything so pretentious at this point, since all I can do here is to initiate the Christian answer, I propose to do so simply by turning to the experience and the teachings of John Wesley. It is unfortunate, I think, that Methodist schools of theology have been so little affected by neo-orthodoxy. We already have a neo-orthodoxy based on Luther and on Calvin. It might now be in order to have a neo-orthodoxy based on John Wesley. This might prove spiritually invigorating to Methodists as well as to other Christians.

In a strictly technical sense, John Wesley was part of what we call the romantic movement in the history of thought. This is reflected in his emphasis on the heart, on feelings, on faith, and on action. But as a good Puritan he was far removed from the sort of secular romanticism we find



in a Rousseau or in a Dewey. One remembers the two principles by which his mother educated her numerous progeny: that they must cry softly; that, when the right time came, they should sit down and learn the entire alphabet in one day. The first is a principle of moral discipline. We must bear our hardships with what fortitude we can muster, and not selfishly flaunt our sufferings before others whose grievances are as great as ours. The Christian cries softly. The second is a principle of intellectual discipline. If we have a hard lesson to learn, then let us sit down and learn it: we do not learn it better, nor make the learning more easy, if we protract it with dilatory dabbling over an endless period of time. So John Wesley was a romantic. But he was a Puritan romantic.

John Wesley was also a child of the Age of Reason. Like his contemporary Rousseau in France, he was a precursor of the romantic revolution that was to come to maturity in the last quarter of the eighteenth century and in the first quarter of the nineteenth century. But while he held faith, hope, and love to be primary, he did not disdain reason. For his times he was, in fact, a most highly educated person. And no one can read his sermons without being struck by the extraordinary intellectual discipline that went into the design of them; so that the power and the passion and the eloquence of the spoken word are wedded to a structure of logic that constrains the mind as it captures the heart. But Wesley knew that Reason is not our Redeemer; Christ is our Redeemer. And the best way to convert the intellect is to convert the entire person. Certainly reason is an excellent tool, but it must be a tool in the hands of love if it is to work weal instead of woe.

John Wesley had respect for his daily bread, but he was no idolator of Mammon. In spite of his quarrels with the Calvinists, he could agree with John Calvin concerning the true prosperity of man. The people to whom he ministered were hungry for the bread of the belly. He gave them the bread of life. He taught them to seek first the Kingdom of God, and to have faith that the other things would be added unto them. In the perspective of some two hundred years of Methodist history, can we say that he taught them wrongly? As for the prescriptions of his economic ethics—"Gain all you can, Save all you can, Give all you can!"—are they really the expression of an outmoded individualism? At least they emphasized the dignity of labor, the importance of simplicity in personal living, and the responsibility of stewardship toward others. There have been some striking exemplifications of the genius of this ethics even in our own times. If there needed to be joined to it a more comprehensive social ethics,

that was to come shortly within the very movement which he had initiated.

John Wesley took no delight in war, but he understood the imperative of duty. And "duty" in his day had not yet become that obsolete and almost obscene four-letter word which it is in our vocabulary. He also understood the meaning of total commitment to an ideal. Under his preaching men did not have to go to war to find these things. They could find them in the Christian faith. Moreover, this duty and this commitment were not simple affairs of mystical exaltation, nor of the easy effusion of generous sentiments of affection and of piety. They were under the discipline of method. What a paradox it is that this outpouring of the Holy Spirit should have been constrained and strengthened by the routine of prayer, of Bible reading, of mutual admonition, of efficient organization, of purge and of penance. From such a duty and from such a commitment one might almost escape into the army in order to find freedom and irresponsibility!

In sum: John Wesley was a romantic, but a Puritan romantic. He was a rationalist, but like Paul he held reason subordinate to love. He was a sort of materialist, if you like, but an evangelical materialist. He was a fighting man, a warrior for Christ. And unlike the secularists in these parallel traditions he understood that man's soul and body and reason and will cannot receive their proper fulfillment unless they are laid on the altar of God.

I therefore propose a kind of neo-Wesleyan orthodoxy which would transcend denominational lines, for what Wesley had to say at this point is universally applicable.

# Professor Brightman's Theory of the Given

ROLAND STAHL

AMONG THE MANY contributions to religious thought made by Edgar Sheffield Brightman, the most famous and most controversial was his attempt to solve the problem of evil. He did not feel that a solution to the problem meant explaining away evil, nor did he feel compelled to keep intact traditional ideas about God. He explained his approach to the problem in the following words:

A rational definition of the evil of evil and the good of good and their relations to purpose in the universe would be a genuine solution to the problem. . . . Our desires for a spotless perfection in the universe cannot by themselves determine the truth. . . . All that rational thought can do is face the facts and then give an account of them that is all-inclusive and inherently systematic.<sup>1</sup>

The result of Professor Brightman's study was his famous theory of the "Given" and the "Finite God." Although he received strong opposition, Professor Brightman did not feel that any of his critics succeeded in refuting the theory, either by showing errors in his thinking or by advancing a preferable alternative, and he continued to teach and defend his theory as long as he lived. It seems that the time has come, therefore, to re-examine his views in order to ascertain precisely what his teaching was and determine as far as possible to what extent it will stand the test of his own criteria of coherence and rational consistency.

In *The Problem of God*, Brightman defined God as follows: "God is a Person supremely conscious, supremely valuable, and supremely creative, yet limited both by the free choices of other persons and by restrictions within his own nature." Regarding these "restrictions," he said:

There is in God's very nature something which makes the effort and pain of life necessary. There is within him, in addition to his reason and his active creative will, a passive element which enters into every one of his conscious states, as sensation, instinct and impulse enter into ours, and constitute a problem for him.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Brightman, E. S., *A Philosophy of Religion* (hereafter abbreviated as *PR*), Prentice-Hall, 1940, pp. 279-280. All references will be to the work of Brightman unless otherwise noted.

<sup>2</sup> *The Problem of God* (hereafter *PG*), The Abingdon Press, 1930, p. 113.

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Brightman gave the name of "The Given" to "all that is eternal and uncreated in the divine nature, other than the actual will of God," including both the "passive element" and "the eternal divine reason, with its principles of truth, beauty and goodness."<sup>3</sup>

A few months before his final illness, Professor Brightman wrote to the author in response to some questions he had asked concerning the "Given," particularly in regard to the origins of the theory and its relationships to the thought of others. He indicated that the significant influences in the formation of his theory were Bergson, Darwin, and Plato.

*Re the Given:* Its first dim forebodings came to me at Wesleyan in connection with Bergson, before 1919. Then it began to take form at CLA [College of Liberal Arts, Boston University] through a comparative study of Plato, Berkeley and Darwin in a course in metaphysics. From then on, I owed little to others although I have tried to incorporate suggestions from many sources. I used the creation story of Gen. in "Chaos and Cosmos" in RELIGION IN LIFE.<sup>4</sup> . . . I recognize the relation to Peirce's tychism, although I was not influenced by him at the start. James influenced me more in other respects than in his rather vague "finite God." There is close analogy to Peirce, as to Schelling and somewhat to Boehme (and even to Hegel!). . . . There are also parallels in Hindu thought (*rajas, sattva, etc.*).

This letter suggests many lines of inquiry which have been useful in this appraisal of Brightman's views.

Professor Brightman claimed that the first dim forebodings of the theory of the Given came to him before 1919. This early interest in the problem is revealed by an article published in 1919 in the *American Journal of Theology* called, "The Lisbon Earthquake: A Study in Religious Valuation." In this, one of his earliest articles in the field of philosophy, he reviewed the opinions of prominent thinkers of the eighteenth century concerning that great disaster. He criticized severely the optimism of Leibnitz and Pope, and suggested that the only view of God that was empirically and religiously adequate in the presence of such a calamity was a theory of a "finite God."

# I

In *The Problem of God*, Brightman gave four main types of evidence by which he concluded that God is limited. The evidence from evolution impressed him first; other evidence was furnished by the nature of consciousness, the principle of the dialectic, and religious experience.

From the data on biological evolution provided by Darwin, Brightman became convinced of the existence of a class of phenomena which he called

<sup>3</sup> "The Given and Its Critics," in RELIGION IN LIFE, I (1932), 134-145; p. 134.

<sup>4</sup> "Chaos and Cosmos: A Meditation for These Times," in RELIGION IN LIFE, 9 (1940), 16-30.

"dysteleological surds." These are evils which in no way can be expressed in terms of purpose and value, as surds in mathematics are quantities which cannot be expressed in rational numbers. Men had at one time felt that the theory of evolution was destructive of religious faith because of the teaching that man descended from nonhuman ancestors. But this, said Brightman from his standpoint of a dynamic idea of God, was positive evidence for God, because it showed "law, creative evolution, and purposive advance."

However, he said, "The real difficulty for religion arises from the cruel and irrational waste and the seemingly aimless futility which evolutionary studies have revealed."<sup>5</sup> In addition there seems to be purposeless evil in the destructive forces of nature and the suffering and misery caused by disease. The theory of the Given stands or falls upon the presence or absence of such surds. If real surds exist, then God is limited by a factor which may be called the Given. On the other hand, if apparent evil may be expressed ultimately in terms of good purposes, then the doctrine of God's absolute omnipotence may be sustained. Brightman felt that the more one studied the empirical evidence, the more one must be convinced that God is both perfectly good and finite in power. There is an abundance of evidence for teleology, but there is also evidence that God's purposes have only been achieved by a long and relentless struggle.

The extra-human factors which delay or thwart the realization of what is ideally best must ultimately be ascribed to God in all detail—either to his will or to his nature. Tornadoes, earthquakes, tidal waves, volcanoes, idiocy, insanity, hysteria, cancer, infantile paralysis—all these ills somehow come from God. Traditional theism has ascribed them to his will. I revolt against this as a hideous doctrine and ascribe the evils not to his will, but to his struggle with the Given. They occur in spite of his will; but his will is adequate to extract value even from the most adverse possible circumstances.<sup>6</sup>

Many critics have argued that dysteleological surds do not exist, but that the evils may ultimately be expressed in terms of God's good purposes. With Albert C. Knudson, they hold that while we may not be able to discern the purposes behind all natural phenomena, the attitude of faith is to trust God and, believing in his omnipotence, rest assured that he has ends in view of which we are ignorant. Of this view Brightman says:

If the dysteleological facts are disposed of, as many theists would dispose of them, by appeal to human ignorance of the Absolute Will of the Almighty, then by the same logic the teleological facts have also to be disposed of. If we do not know

<sup>5</sup> *PR*, 316-317.

<sup>6</sup> Art. "The Given and Its Critics," 135.

enough to judge that an evil is an evil, then we do not know enough to judge that a good is a good. . . . From ignorance no concrete metaphysical truth can be inferred, certainly not the proposition that God's in his heaven, all's right with the world.<sup>7</sup>

Another criticism of the view of surds in nature is made by Knudson in maintaining that since God created all things, and since he had the choice either to create or not create, then he must have felt that any evils incident to creation must be "justified by the total outcome."<sup>8</sup> Otherwise he would have refrained from creating. But Brightman disagrees. He claims that the good resulting from the creation justifies the *creation*, but not the *evils* which are necessarily created with it.

Neither man nor God can rightly call evil good. . . . But the fact that evil must enter into any possible creation does not mean that the act of creation is evil. Creation means only that God is responsible for exercising redemptive love; it does not mean that he is either responsible for or acquiescent in the evils which his will does not create, but finds.<sup>9</sup>

While Darwin provided the vast accumulation of empirical data from which the idea of surds in nature may be inferred, it was Bergson's interpretation of the data that provided the germinative ideas behind Brightman's theory, because it was apparently his views on time and creative evolution that led Brightman to what he called his "temporalist" idea of God. Brightman contrasted this view with what he called an "eternalistic" view, but he hastened to explain that his own position does not deny that God is eternal; it merely denies that his eternality separates God from time and history.

Religion has sung of the day when "the trumpet of the Lord shall sound and time shall be no more"; but if there is such a day, thought cannot avoid asking about the day after that. . . . The only God worth believing in . . . is a God in living relation to the facts of cosmic and human history. He is a God into whose very being time enters: we need a temporalistic rather than a purely eternalistic view of God. . . . For to call God temporal is not to deny that he is eternal; it is only to deny he is timeless, or that he is not intimately related to and concerned with events in time.<sup>10</sup>

These ideas, including the idea of limitations within the divine nature, were expressed by F. H. Foster in the article which Brightman said first suggested to him the idea of a finite God.<sup>11</sup> "The imperfections of the Vital Impulse

<sup>7</sup> "An Empirical Approach to God," in *The Philosophical Review*, 46 (1937), 147-169; p. 167.

<sup>8</sup> Knudson, A. J., *The Doctrine of Redemption*, The Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, 1933, p. 208.

<sup>9</sup> *PR*, 334.

<sup>10</sup> *PG*, 129-130. Brightman has pointed out that his view of time is Bergson's "real duration," rather than the space-time of physics. During a classroom discussion, he once suggested that the common ascription of "timelessness" to God was more properly rendered "time-full."

<sup>11</sup> *PG*, 10.



must be God's own imperfection, if he is morally in earnest with this world, that is, if he is God. . . . [The imperfections] necessitate a developing God since it is impossible on the basis of a static God."<sup>12</sup>

With this dynamic view of God, Brightman claimed that evolution presented evidence of God's creative power at work.<sup>13</sup> It also provided man with a source of optimism about the future, for God "has more to do than he has yet done."<sup>14</sup> Bergson in his *Creative Evolution* rejected the common view of "radical finalism," that is, that "things and beings merely realize a program previously arranged."<sup>15</sup> He insisted that, as there is life and movement in reality, so it exhibits a progressive advance into novelty. The *élan vital* constantly seeks to develop in a greater and greater degree, as free, self-conscious spirit, but because of this freedom it is impossible to predict what forms will be produced. The production of new forms is the creation of new potentialities, which means the creation of new possibilities and also new problems. Evolution, said Brightman, "is not merely a recombination of pre-existing elements, but it is the scene of the arrival of new qualities . . . genuine novelty."<sup>16</sup> He refers with approval to Wundt's "Law of the Increase of [Spiritual] Energy," which had been referred to by Foster in his 1918 article. "Now God is spiritual energy; and if this, as Wundt says, tends of its very nature to increase, then God is Becoming by virtue of his very nature as spiritual."<sup>17</sup>

## II

The second of Brightman's arguments for the finite God is that from the nature of consciousness. He claims that if God is personal, then he *must* be finite, and this for three reasons found in the nature of consciousness.<sup>18</sup> First, personality is free, whether human or divine, and the acts of free persons cannot be predicted with certainty. Just as the free activity of God results in novelty, so do the acts of finite persons, and they limit the possibility of foreknowledge by God. God's activity is, then, not a single act, but a constant process. He works in time, shaping and molding the universe in accordance with the changing conditions, always, however, bringing out the greatest possible amount of value.

<sup>12</sup> Foster, F. H., "Some Theistic Implications of Bergson's Philosophy," in *The American Journal of Theology*, 22 (1918), 274-299; p. 283.

<sup>13</sup> *Religious Values (RV)*, The Abingdon Press, 1925, p. 206.

<sup>14</sup> *PG*, 11.

<sup>15</sup> Bergson, Henri, *Creative Evolution (CE)*, The Modern Library, 1944, p. 45.

<sup>16</sup> *PG*, 123-124.

<sup>17</sup> *RV*, 207.

<sup>18</sup> *PG*, 131-135.

Secondly, Brightman insists that there is "an indispensable relation between the will and the nature of any conscious being." This fact, he says, is overlooked by those traditionalists who follow Aristotle in saying that God is self-caused (*causa sui*) and pure actuality (*actus purus*).<sup>19</sup> This makes God pure self-caused will and leaves his nature without any content. Even Knudson, whom Brightman recognized as his most searching critic, admitted that there must be a content to the divine nature and that "in thus giving direction to the divine will the divine nature may be said to limit it."<sup>20</sup> But Knudson insisted that the divine nature exists "only in and through the activity of the divine will, so that one might in a sense say with Spinoza that God is the cause of himself."<sup>21</sup> This difference of opinion between Brightman and Knudson suggests the famous medieval controversy between Thomas Aquinas and Duns Scotus. Following Scotus, Knudson insisted on the primacy of God's will, while Brightman held to the primacy of God's nature. As he put it,

Any being must be *something* and so must have a nature. . . . The nature of God is prior to his will. The picture of a God without any nature or properties willing himself into being is quaint but not convincing. A mere ghostly will would have nothing to operate on; it would be contentless and formless chaos.<sup>22</sup>

### III

Brightman's third reason for asserting that personality involves finitude is that personality is a combination of both active and passive factors, such as will and sensation, acting and suffering—more generally, form and content. This content is "a source of obstacles, delays, problems, and suffering, as well as an instrument for the expression of his will."<sup>23</sup> This insistence on the distinction between form and content within personality reflects the influence of Plato. In fact, Brightman once called his philosophy "personalized Platonism."<sup>24</sup> It was the later work of Plato that influenced Brightman most in his theory of the Given, such as the *Philebus* and the *Timaeus*. Brightman was especially appreciative of the splendid analysis of Plato's thought made by Raphael Demos, and admitted that the theory of the Given owes much to his book. Demos wrote:

Plato's account of God contains the germs of the idea of a divine personality, germs which came to maturity in Christian thought, also germs which were suppressed by Christian thought. The idea of a loving father was emphasized in later develop-

<sup>19</sup> PG, 133.

<sup>20</sup> Knudson, *The Doctrine of God (DG)*, Abingdon Press, 1930, p. 270.

<sup>21</sup> Knudson, *DG*, 274.

<sup>22</sup> PG, 179-180.

<sup>23</sup> Letter to *The Christian Century*, Oct. 26, 1932.

<sup>24</sup> PR, 339.

ments; but the conception of a God who uses persuasion instead of coercion towards his creatures was often overlooked by later thinkers in their zeal to emphasize the omnipotence of God at all costs. . . . God became omnipotent and all-creative and, as such, responsible somehow for evil. Thus the radical distinction between good and evil was blurred.<sup>25</sup>

In *The Problem of God*, Brightman discussed religious thought in terms of the "expansion" and "contraction" of the idea of God. The expansion was due to the opinion that the essential feature of God is his absoluteness with all positive attributes applied to God in a superlative degree. This virtually equated him with Pure Being and tended so to exalt God that he became increasingly vague while individual things diminished in reality and value. Brightman held that thought needed the contraction of the idea of God in order that he might become increasingly definite and meaningful. In this he was influenced by the Greek idea of perfection as discussed in Plato's *Philebus*. There the concept of the Unlimited, instead of being equated with perfection, meant the meaningless and indefinite, while the Limited meant that which is determinate and definite, with the Perfect Being the completely determinate Being. For the Greeks the Finite is the form of God, rather than the Infinite. As Brightman said in a lecture, "to be absolutely infinite is the same thing as being absolutely indefinite." Beauty, goodness, order, meaning are all limitations upon infinity.

In the *Timaeus*, God, the Demiurge, is thought of as a divine craftsman who created the world in accordance with an eternal Pattern of a "perfect whole of perfect parts." But the creative act is limited by the limited potentialities of the Receptacle, the formless matter or "nonbeing" which is the stuff from which the universe is created. It contains a nonrational element which Plato called the "errant cause." Brightman considered this an accurate analysis of the structure of experience which he said was made up of activity or energy (the Demiurge), rational form (the Pattern), and brute fact (the Receptacle). "All experience," he said, "is a constant activity, which seeks to impose the forms of reason on the content of brute fact."<sup>26</sup>

In Brightman's 1940 article on "Chaos and Cosmos," he applied these Platonic ideas to the concept of creation. He pointed out that the Genesis story has much in common with Plato's account. Both thought of God as a divine craftsman fashioning the world from a pre-existing chaotic material. Creation was not a single act in time by an omnipotent God, but is an

<sup>25</sup> Demos, R., *The Philosophy of Plato (POP)*, Charles Scribner's Sons, 1939, 119-120. See Brightman, *PR*, 338n.

<sup>26</sup> *PR*, 320.

eternal process in which God strives with chaos, bringing into being beauty, order, and value. The Augustinian concept of creation *ex nihilo* is neither scriptural nor reasonable. Brightman rejected it because it presupposed that God created time and existed before time as Pure Form without content. This he said is "impossible for thought," citing the judgment of Locke.

A temporalist . . . is forced to agree with the statement of Locke in Book IV of his *Essay* (x, 8): "There is no truth more evident than that *something* must be from eternity. I never yet heard of any one so unreasonable, or that could suppose so manifest a contradiction, as a time wherein was perfectly nothing. This being of all absurdities the greatest, to imagine that pure nothing, the perfect negation and absence of all beings, should ever produce any real existence."<sup>27</sup>

As Brightman found in Plato's cosmology views similar to his own, so he found the same analysis of experience in Hindu theism. As reality contains will, reason, and content, so in Hindu thought it is analyzed into *rajas*, *sattva*, and *tamas*, which mean energy, intelligence, and materiality.<sup>28</sup> These are the *gunas* or qualities of *Saguna Brahman* or Brahman-with-qualities. Shankara, who represents the extreme absolutist position in India, felt that this qualified personal God was the form in which Brahman is conceived by finite minds, but the Reality behind the form he held to be the absolutely unqualified Brahman who could not be conceived at all. But Ramanuja, of whose thought Brightman often spoke with admiration, held that God was both personal and the ground of all being, and that experience was rightly analyzed into *rajas*, *sattva*, and *tamas*. Radhakrishnan pointed out that in holding to a personal God, Ramanuja committed himself to a view of God with a given nature which is prior to and a limitation upon his will.

It is quite true that these given elements, on which the divine will is dependent in creation, are not given from outside . . . but inhere in God as his modes. At any rate, the will of God is dependent on their preexistence. It is theoretically possible to imagine that with a different kind of material the world could have been shaped better. God could not choose the best of all possible worlds, but was obliged to make the best of the given one.<sup>29</sup>

Radhakrishnan noted also that Ramanuja's view necessarily involved a concept of God as dynamic, "who includes the time process and the creation of the world." He felt that a personal God meant the substitution for "the immutable perfection of the Absolute" of a "perpetually changing process, a sort of progressing perfection."<sup>30</sup>

<sup>27</sup> "A Temporalist View of God," in *The Journal of Religion*, 12 (1932), 545-555; p. 546.

<sup>28</sup> *PR*, 340.

<sup>29</sup> Radhakrishnan, S., *Indian Philosophy (IP)*, Allen & Unwin, 1927; Vol. II, p. 699.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*, II, 716.

Brightman's third main argument for the finiteness of God involved Hegel's principle of the dialectic, although Hegel certainly felt that God was infinite. But Brightman felt that Hegel's empiricism—which he constantly defended against Hegel's detractors—sometimes led him beyond the conclusions of his system. He described Hegel's principle in the following way:

All reality is full of opposition and contrast; everything that is stands in contrast to something else; every thesis implies some sort of antithesis. This means that the nature of God is to contain opposition and tension. But every opposition leads on to a higher level of life; every struggle points to a higher meaning or synthesis. Thus, for Hegel, as for our view, the divine life consists essentially of struggle and victory over opposition, a victory for which a price has always to be paid even by God himself.<sup>31</sup>

The "principle of negativity," of opposition and suffering within reality itself, was an important point for Hegel, who was as critical as Brightman of views that neglected the variety and internal activity of reality. Perhaps Brightman's favorite passage from Hegel was the one from the Introduction to the *Phenomenology of Mind* in which he discussed the "seriousness of the negative." "The life of God and divine intelligence, then, can, if we like, be spoken of as love disporting with itself; but this idea falls into edification, and even sinks into insipidity, if it lacks the seriousness, the suffering, the patience, and the labour of the negative."<sup>32</sup>

The idea of "love disporting with itself" is a reference to the doctrine of Indian idealism which looks upon empirical reality as ultimately unreal, consisting of the "play" or "sport" of Brahman. This idea was rejected by Ramanuja, and Radhakrishnan noted the similarity in thought between Ramanuja and Hegel at this point, at the same time pointing out with Brightman that their concept of reality leads to that of a finite God. "Ramanuja and Hegel hold that the ultimate reality is a one containing many. . . . The process of thought consists in the continual absorbing and transcending by mind of its own discrepant and rebellious parts. So all spiritual life is an unceasing struggle with refractory elements."<sup>33</sup>

It might be supposed that the great mystics would, of all men, be opposed to the idea of a conflict within God's nature. Yet Brightman quoted Jacob Boehme as holding views similar to his own. Boehme spoke of "the contrariety and combat in the Being of all beings" and went on to say that "if this were not, there were no nature, but an eternal stillness, and no will."<sup>34</sup>

<sup>31</sup> PG, 135-136.

<sup>32</sup> Loewenberg, *Hegel Selections*, Trans. by J. B. Baillie, Charles Scribner's Sons, 1929, p. 15.

<sup>33</sup> Radhakrishnan, *IP*, II, 559.

<sup>34</sup> Boehme, J., *Signature of All Things*, Everyman's Library, p. 13, quoted in *RV*, 226-227.



This same idea is expressed by Paul Tillich, who speaks of the divine activity as a conflict of being with nonbeing.

Philosophy has dealt with the dynamic self-affirmation of being-itself wherever it spoke dialectically, notably in Neoplatonism, Hegel and the philosophers of life and process. Theology has done the same whenever it took the idea of the living God seriously, most obviously in the trinitarian symbolization of the inner life of God. . . . Nonbeing makes God a living God. Without the No he has to overcome in himself and in his creature, the divine Yes to himself would be lifeless. There would be no revelation of the ground of being, there would be no life. But where there is non-being there is finitude and anxiety.<sup>35</sup>

Tillich went on to point out that the idea of struggle and tension involved in the meaning of existence was recognized by Spinoza, who considered the essence of a real being to be striving (*conatus*). In Tillich's words, "The conatus makes a thing what it is, so that if it disappears the thing itself disappears. (*Ethics* ii, Def. 2)"<sup>36</sup>

This concept of tension as an essential aspect of reality is a most important part of the philosophy of Bergson. He contended that all reality, made up of real duration, existed in a state of tension with each form having its own rhythm of duration. This tension is the meaning of life; if it is relaxed the being dies.<sup>37</sup> From this it follows that God is a living, conscious being who is holding the universe and all history in the tension of his conscious experience. The greater the tension of duration, the greater the freedom enjoyed, but this means a corresponding increase in moral responsibility and constant struggle to maintain the tension. In *The Two Sources of Morality and Religion*, Bergson, in complete accord with Brightman, presented God as a dynamic and personal God of love, who did not will suffering but finds it as a necessity of his being.<sup>38</sup>

Many persons have been troubled by Brightman's view that God's struggle is eternal—that while the Given is always controlled, it can never be eliminated. But Brightman maintained that perfection means completion and held that a God who has completed his work and now has nothing to do is unthinkable, so he preferred to say that God's perfection means his infinite perfectability. On Bergson's theory of consciousness, God could not eliminate the Given without eliminating himself and the universe. Life is a tension between being and nonbeing, so if the struggle within God were ever to cease, then the creation with all its accumulation of value would

<sup>35</sup> Tillich, P., *The Courage to Be*, Yale University Press, 1952, pp. 179-180.

<sup>36</sup> Tillich, *Ibid.*, 20.

<sup>37</sup> Bergson, H., *Matter and Memory*, London: George Allen & Unwin, Ltd., 1913, pp. 267-280.

<sup>38</sup> Bergson, H., *The Two Sources of Morality and Religion*, Henry Holt and Co., 1935, pp. 249-251.



lapse into the primordial formless void. This is an ancient truth recognized by Heraclitus, who said, "Homer was wrong in saying, 'Would that strife might perish from among gods and men.' He did not see that he was praying for the destruction of the universe, for, if his prayer were heard, all things would pass away."<sup>39</sup>

#### IV

The fourth and final argument for a finite God is that from religious experience. Most of the criticism of Brightman's theory has come from clergymen and theologians who have attempted to defend the traditional view. Their general position is that, however sound Brightman's view may be philosophically, it simply does not satisfy the religious consciousness.

Brightman, however, labored long and patiently to point out that the reverse is true, that while the traditional view may satisfy the theologians, it is not the view which is revealed by religious experience. In his 1932 article on "The Given and Its Critics," he answered the criticism of A. E. Garvie, who said that the "religious consciousness seems to me to demand a God perfect in power as well as in goodness," by saying that, "It is possible that the religious consciousness may . . . want more than it can get." In other words, truth is determined by the facts given in experience, and not by whatever one wishes it to be. Then Brightman went on to say that, "For many Christians, the God of theology is an unknown quantity; their God is Christ, in Galilee and on Calvary."<sup>40</sup> There are many varieties of religious experience, but Christian experience means that both love and suffering exist at the heart of the Eternal and are victoriously redemptive.

F. H. Foster in his article on Bergson claimed that the teaching of the Epistle to the Hebrews was that the suffering of Jesus was necessary for salvation. "The suffering, to mean anything to us, must be the suffering of the divine nature through the humanity."<sup>41</sup> The religious interest, he said, is best served by God's reliability, not his unchangeability; by his sufficiency, not his infinity. Bergson claimed that the intellect tends to look upon reality as static, but the intuition looks upon it as dynamic. So, Foster claimed, the insistence upon the static idea of God comes not from the religious intuition but from the intellectualizing of religion by theologians and philosophers. So, too, Brightman found the same criticism in Plato.

The stranger from Elea in Plato's *Sophist* saw clearly the impersonalistic impasse

<sup>39</sup> Heraclitus, Fr. 43, in John Burnet, *Early Greek Philosophy*; London: A. and C. Black, Ltd., 1920.

<sup>40</sup> Art. "The Given and Its Critics," 135.

<sup>41</sup> Foster, *op. cit.*, 195.

into which such eternalism leads one. He said (248E-249A): "But for heaven's sake, shall we let ourselves easily be persuaded that motion and life and soul and mind are really not present to absolute being, that it neither lives nor thinks, but awful and holy, devoid of mind, is fixed and immovable?"<sup>42</sup>

Brightman's most telling argument from religious experience was that from the moral consciousness. He claimed that the denial of the reality of time "cuts the nerve of moral endeavor" by making changes in time meaningless. If all is perfect, he said, why try to improve it?<sup>43</sup> "To prove that all evil is really good—a perfectly good creation of perfectly good purpose—is to destroy every ground for a distinction between good and evil, and thus eventually undermine logic, ethics, and religion."<sup>44</sup> On the other hand, Brightman felt that the theory of the Given furnished an incentive for moral endeavor. The struggle with evil which is God's endless task, his "*unendliche Aufgabe*," as Brightman was fond of saying, is also man's struggle, and religion means "cooperation with God in the control of the Given." Furthermore, the view of God with an eternal task affords ground, he felt, for a belief in cosmic advance and immortality.

Brightman thought that the moral sense forces one to reject the theory that calamity is a punishment for sin, and pointed out that both Job and Jesus also found the idea repugnant. Evil and good, said Jesus, come equally to all, as "the rain falls on the just and the unjust." When the tower of Siloam fell, it landed on those who were below, without selecting only the sinners. When a man born blind was brought to him, Jesus was shocked at the traditional argument that there must have been sin somewhere, either in him or his parents. Likewise, Job refused, even when his sufferings were most painful, to admit that he was being justly punished. Since Job and Jesus, the sufferer need not feel that he is being punished for sin. Instead he is comforted by the thought that God is suffering with him, and that God's power is sufficient to use the very Given which limits his power, to bring goodness and value out of suffering; to give "beauty for ashes; the oil of joy for the spirit of heaviness."

The work of natural and human chaos may seem to leave nothing but devastation; but prophets, poets, dramatists, sculptors, and workers rebuild beauty out of the very materials of chaos—the most strangely moving of beauties out of the most utter chaos. Shakespeare made tragic beauty out of Hamlet's story, Goethe made it out of Faust's, Jesus made it out of the whole world's suffering and sin . . . because the power of beauty is the power of God.<sup>45</sup>

<sup>42</sup> "Bowne: Eternalist or Temporalist," in *The Personalist*, 28 (1947), 257-265, p. 263.

<sup>43</sup> *PR*, 312.

<sup>44</sup> *PR*, 279.

<sup>45</sup> Art. "Chaos and Cosmos," 27.

# Fact, Fiction and Faith

FREDERIC R. CROWNFIELD

THOSE OF US WHO BEGAN our theological education shortly after the first World War have seen something of a revolution in biblical studies. "Liberalism" seems no longer to be the "growing edge" of our discipline; and so far as this represents a recognition that a purely historical approach, guided by a purely historical interest, can offer us no more when applied to the Hebrews, Jews, or early Christians than when it is applied to the Chinese, the Hindus, or the Buddhists, then progress has no doubt been made. As Fichte said, "*Nur das Metaphysiche, keineswegs das Historische, macht selig.*" And yet in the light of human experience one may suspect that the fashions of today are no more likely to remain the final word than did those of a previous student generation. It seems worth while, therefore, to try to discover what seem to be some of the inherently unstable points in the present situation.

## I

Let us begin with this point, that we have come to recognize that man is not saved by history alone, whether we take that to mean "knowledge of historical fact" or "operation of historical process." Let it be granted that men must be saved by faith, not by recovering that "historical Jesus" whose "ethical teachings" could guide us in our efforts "to build the Kingdom of God on earth" toward which we are in any case slowly evolving. But how is our faith to be related to fact? And is there danger that if we do not properly conceive this relationship we shall land in what is neither fact nor faith, but fiction?

We are frequently told nowadays that the effort to be objective is not only vain but vicious, as the following words of Dr. Floyd V. Filson show:

Still disputed is the question whether historical study must be rigidly objective. The necessity to be honest, to avoid wishful thinking and partisan bias is the essential point in the demand for objective scholarship. But life is not the neutral area which this position assumes; it is impossible to study, correlate, and present truly, the origin

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and classic history of a religious movement without the element of evaluation entering into the process.

This is not all. By the Christian scholar, committed as he is in mind and life to Christ, the demand that he do his historical study without personal response and evaluation must be rejected. Honesty, integrity, fairness, patience and a sense of his limitations as a man and scholar may be demanded, but neutrality is out of the question. New Testament theology, broadened to become Biblical theology and frankly combining with its diligent historical research the grasp of the meaning of history in the light of the Gospel, is a Christian necessity as well as a scholarly activity. It is time to be done with the deceptive myth of neutrality.<sup>1</sup>

Surely there is a dangerous confusion here, growing out of a distorted view of the meaning of objectivity. Life is indeed not neutral and we can hardly study the history of the beginnings of Christianity without evaluating it in respect to its meaning for us. But to conclude from this that we should not seek results which are truly objective will be ultimately destructive not only of scholarship but of religion itself. Surely Whitehead's word is in order here: "In an intellectual age there can be no active interest which puts aside all hope of a vision of the harmony of truth. To acquiesce in discrepancy is destructive of candour, and of moral cleanliness."<sup>2</sup> The quest for objectivity is not a quest for facts which evoke no response but an attempt to discover *that which is there for everyone*, instead of existing only for some private consciousness. These pages have an objective existence because anyone can verify in the appropriate way their existence, whether he likes what he reads from them or not.

It may be granted at once that the quest for objective knowledge about the career of Jesus, for example, is one of vastly greater difficulty and complication. Objective knowledge of the past must rest on evidence and the evidence in this case is fragmentary, often seemingly contradictory, and always difficult to interpret. One reason this is so is because it comes to us as selected by and expressed in terms of the faith of the early Christians, but surely that faith was a response to some objective facts. To demand that we accept their faith "on faith" seems a repudiation of Christianity's claim to be founded on a real life which represented the manifestation of God on the plane of history. If we reduce this manifestation to some unknown "X" which somehow produced the early Christian faith, which then becomes the historical source of our faith, what do we more than others? Do not even the Buddhists of the Mahayana so?

If this were the only point at issue, perhaps with a little patience and

<sup>1</sup> Nash, A. S., ed., *Protestant Thought in the Twentieth Century*, The Macmillan Company, 1951, p. 64.

<sup>2</sup> Whitehead, A. N., *Science and the Modern World*, The Macmillan Company, 1925, p. 258.

care about definitions we might come to some general agreement. But there is a further complicating factor. Says Filson about "objective" study of history:

The sovereign and transcendent God cannot be taken into account [in it]. . . . This raises a basic question of truth. If God does so act, a method of studying and writing history without putting him at the center is not simply faulty from a theological point of view. It is equally unsatisfactory as a historical method, for it is not telling the story as it really was brought about, as it really happened.<sup>3</sup>

Obviously if God is one of the actors in history, or even the invisible author, producer, and director of the show, we shall not give an accurate account of it if we leave him out. But is God related to history as a participant in it, or in some other way? This, of course, is not a historical question but a philosophical one, as Filson indeed recognizes. But it cannot be dismissed simply by mentioning transcendence and immanence, as if it were then immediately obvious that the only possible position for a religious man was "transcendence." The God of Aristotle's metaphysics was unambiguously transcendent, but he was not involved in the world at all, cared nothing for it and spent eternity "thinking on thinking."<sup>4</sup> Neither the word *logos* nor the blessed word "paradox" can convert this into the almost naïvely anthropomorphic deity the biblical theologians talk about.

At this point there may appear to be ground for a legitimate protest. On the one hand it will be said that no one ought to suppose the anthropomorphic language is meant literally, and on the other hand, that faith has nothing to do with philosophy. This does not, however, dispose of the problem. To start with the latter point, whether we will or no, we cannot escape having a philosophy. The only choice open is whether we will make our philosophy explicit and try to think it through or whether we will pick it up unawares, deny that we have one, and refuse to accept the consequences of it whenever they become inconvenient. The present instance is a case in point. To justify speaking of God as at once "transcendent" and "independent personal will and action,"<sup>5</sup> while avoiding the pitfalls of an impossible anthropomorphism, is either to undertake a philosophical enterprise of first magnitude or else to confess that we are using language whose meaning we do not know. To do the latter will in the end reduce religion to a primitive incantation in which it is essential to pronounce the proper

<sup>3</sup> Filson, F. V., "Method in Studying Biblical History," in *Journal of Biblical Literature*, LXIX, p. 12f.

<sup>4</sup> Aristotle, *Metaphysics*, 1074 b.

<sup>5</sup> Filson, *loc. cit.*

syllables but in which it is quite unnecessary to know their meaning, or indeed for them to have any.

## II

Let us turn now to some of the consequences of this repudiation of the quest for "objective" knowledge, or, so to speak, knowledge in the public domain. Is it not the inevitable consequence that many recent books and articles show an inability to distinguish between fact and fiction at crucial points, and offer conclusions which originate in fallacies and wishful thinking?

One very common type of fallacy is the assumption that we may believe what we please about matters of fact so long as there is no evidence to the contrary. Unfortunately this type of error did not originate with the decline of "liberalism," but it still persists and offers an inviting trap for anyone who has repudiated "objectivity." To cite just one recent example, Professor Bright says of 1 Peter: "There is no convincing objection to a date in the reign of Nero."<sup>6</sup> This date may or may not be correct, but surely a position ought to be adopted because there is evidence for it, not because there is nothing that can refute anybody who is determined to believe it.

Furthermore, this demand for evidence becomes the more acute the more weight you propose to put on the assertion. Consider, for example, the application to Jesus of the conception of the Suffering Servant. Surely it is a legitimate question as to whether this application was first made by Jesus or by the early church, and once the question is raised it is by no means easy to answer. The position of C. H. Dodd, however, would suffer severe damage if the application had not been made by Jesus, so he boldly says, "There is every reason to believe the reference is due to Jesus Himself."<sup>7</sup> Professor Bright, for whom the assertion is equally important, says, "It is, in my opinion, *the surest fact* of New Testament criticism that Jesus both understood the parallel between his ministry and that of the Servant and intended it to be so."<sup>8</sup> In the face of such a statement one hardly knows what to say. But if all the other results of New Testament criticism are even less certain than this, then it is too bad biblical scholars have not, like the rabbis of old, been taught a trade. In this bankruptcy of our endeavors we could turn to it and at least earn an honest living.

<sup>6</sup> *The Kingdom of God*, The Abingdon Press, 1953, p. 235, n. 24.

<sup>7</sup> *The Bible Today*, The Macmillan Company, 1946, p. 94.

<sup>8</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 209 (italics mine).



Another way of dealing with this kind of situation is to recognize its existence and then call on faith to get us out. Thus, discussing the question of whether Jesus believed he was the Messiah, C. T. Craig referred to the antithetical conclusions of various scholars and said:

I believe that in each case the form of religious faith held by the scholar was contributory to the decision made. I do not make this as a charge, but as the recognition of an inevitable situation—that, even in the consideration of questions of simple fact, no one can view the evidence except through the glasses of his own life experience.<sup>9</sup>

It may well be that the conclusions of various scholars on this point have been influenced by their life experiences. But what this really shows is not that all conclusions are subjective and that we may therefore believe as we please (or as we are told) but simply that in this case the evidence is not sufficient for any assured conclusions. Not everything about Jesus is in the same category. That he was "born . . . , suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died and was buried" seems about as certain as facts in ancient history can be, without regard to our faith or lack of it. But where the evidence necessary for a secure conclusion is inadequate, faith cannot make up for it. That is not the role of faith in religion. Faith is envisagement of possibilities, commitment to ideals, devotion to goals. Here we can agree wholeheartedly with Bright, "To say Yes to the Kingdom of God and to submit to its rule *is* faith."<sup>10</sup> But such faith can never be a warrant for matters of fact for which there is no evidence.

### III

This does not mean that Christian faith has no relation to facts. Our faith is what we make of the facts, what we take their meaning to be, how we respond to them. Confronted by such facts about the life and teaching of Jesus of Nazareth as we can establish with a reasonable degree of probability, what do we make of them? What light do they throw on the meaning and goal of our efforts? This is not a matter of finding something Jesus said that we can apply to these questions, having "faith" that if he said it, it must be the right answer.

Here we are confronted with a man whose life seems devoid of the values we seek. It was marked by utmost simplicity. Jesus had neither wealth nor property nor any interest in acquiring them. He was not a

<sup>9</sup> "The Problem of the Messiahship of Jesus," in *New Testament Studies*, edited by E. P. Booth, The Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, 1942, p. 114.

<sup>10</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 220.

learned man and did not even think it important to be called "doctor." He held no position of prominence and any fame he may have enjoyed was fleeting. He was a citizen of a conquered nation with no concern for setting it free. He advocated and seems to have practiced a radical denial of self—whether it took the form of self-interest, self-assertion, self-defense, or any form of self-exaltation. He seems to have been equally devoid of ambition, and of any spirit of revenge. He expressed himself in terms of cosmological and apocalyptic presuppositions which we cannot share. His brief career came to an end when he was executed by the head of the Roman occupation government as a potential revolutionary. Behind all of this was a radical devotion to God's will and a humble trust in and response to God's overwhelming goodness, in spite of the fact that Jesus seemed to have missed most of the things that, as we say, "make life worth while."

It is in our reaction to such facts that faith arises. Faith is not the belief that these things all happened so that we, as a reward for believing, can avoid having them happen to us. Nor is it the belief that those who call Jesus "Lord, Lord," will not have to do the things which he says because their sins will be forgiven. Faith is to see behind these facts a revelation of the nature of God and his meaning for human life. It is to recognize a judgment on our values and the way in which we seek them. It is to realize that it is by such strange means that the world is to be redeemed from evil. The suffering of the righteous may not be sheer, unrelieved tragedy. It may have in it a meaning and a power which carries the promise of the ultimate overthrow of evil. If evil is to be really removed and not simply controlled, it will only be by the exhibition of the real character of goodness face to face with evil.

We are often reminded that the Christian faith is a *skandalon*, and so it must be. But it is a mistake to locate the cause of offense in any affront to our minds. The trouble lies deeper than that. It does not challenge us to believe what is inadequately attested as matter of fact, but to forsake an attitude toward life which seems to be the natural response to the demands of our physical and social nature. We are saved by this faith not because it makes it possible for God to confer on us a certain status, but because when one responds with his whole being to the claim that self-denial, self-sacrifice, and patient bearing of injustice are not defeat and loss, but victory and gain, then he is *in fact* delivered from the fear, the "anxiety," the estrangement, the guilt, the tension which the natural man strives to overcome by various devices through which he can protect him-

self and provide for his own security. To have faith is to discover that one must lose his life to find it. It is to become in truth the sons of the Father in heaven who pours out his goodness on the evil and on the good, on the just and on the unjust, without thought as to their "deserts," as to whether they are for him or against him, limited only by men's willingness to see what he offers and accept it at his hand.

This faith rests neither on credulity nor on tampering with the facts. It is evoked by facts, but it has nothing to fear from the attempt to establish what we can on an objective basis.

Religious faith has its place, but it is doing no service to either religion or science to allow religious faith the authority which belongs to history, or vice versa. Both faith and history have their gaps, but they do not exactly supplement each other. Rather history illustrates faith and faith interprets history. Without illegitimate borrowings between them we may follow both as far as each will lead us.<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> Cadbury, H. J., *The Peril of Modernizing Jesus*, The Macmillan Company, 1938, p. 193 (the closing words of the book).

# What Is Liberalism?

HENRY E. KOLBE

## I. THE PROBLEM

ONE MAJOR FOCUS of contemporary theological-religious concern is the concept of "liberalism" and its relations to other ways of religious thought or practice. "Liberal" and "liberalism" may be terms either of praise or opprobrium, according as one counts himself among those to whom the terms are applied or among their opponents. Yet there are so many chickens, of such varied breeds, resting under the wings of "liberalism" that one wonders what they have in common except the name. This is not, of course, a condition peculiar to religious liberalism. Under any group label will be found a wide range of viewpoints and even differences on basic principles, so that the inadequacy of grouping and labeling is evident.

It is unfortunate that neither friend nor foe takes pains to delineate carefully what he means when he speaks either proudly or scornfully of liberals or liberalism. For it is evident, when the contexts of controversy are analyzed, that differing connotations are frequently given these terms by the conflicting disputants. This conflict of meanings is without doubt responsible for much of the sharpness of disagreement between theological-religious liberals and their opponents. If the usages of these words in discussion were analyzed to show the particular meaning or meanings intended, much bitterness of dispute might be avoided.

The concern for the clarification of the meaning of terms is a part of one of the "great traditions" of inquiry. Professor James A. Creighton, of Cornell University, once defined philosophy as "the art of affixing labels." Long before him, Confucius had said that "the rectification of names"—the conforming of word and fact with one another—is an important way to the solution of man's problems. These have their counterparts in the present-day concern for semantic analysis on the part of both linguists and philosophers. Not all problems can be solved semantically, of course, but a proper understanding of the meanings of terms may go far toward narrowing the range and diminishing the rancor of debate and dispute.

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Problems can be solved rationally only by means of communication and understanding. These are reciprocally related: we can communicate with others only as they and we understand one another, and communication enhances the range of understanding. Yet the words used to communicate thought and feeling may by accident or design serve also to hide or distort them. This is not simply a modern sin, for Socrates, we recall, roundly criticized the Sophists for seeking to "make the worse seem the better way." It is, however, particularly dangerous in our time, when the development of modern means of communication and the discovery of many of the psychological principles involved in thinking and evaluating have led to the exploitation of techniques of propaganda which constitute a serious threat to contemporary culture and civilization. It is, therefore, all the more important that attention be paid to the words which are used to designate groups, whether of friends or foes, and to point out attitudes, whether of one's self or others.

## II. FIVE SUGGESTED MEANINGS OF "LIBERALISM"

What, then, is the meaning—or what are the meanings—of "liberalism," particularly in the area of religious thought and practice? And what, consequently, is a liberal?

First, liberalism is a *spirit*, and the liberal is one who shows forth this spirit. It is a spirit characterized by open-mindedness toward truth and by a nondogmatic attitude which refuses to close accounts prematurely. Its hallmarks are humility, tolerance for the views of those who differ, and an active acquisitiveness which sets no limits to the ranging of the mind. It is generous and optimistic, a reforming and progressive spirit. It is thus like the charity or love described by St. Paul in 1 Corinthians 13. Seen in this aspect, liberalism bears a close affinity to what are commonly called "the Christian spirit" and "the spirit of democracy." In this sense of the word, every believer in democracy and every Christian, though not only these, not only can be but ought to be a liberal, else he denies his profession in a very significant dimension.

Second, liberalism is a *method*, and a liberal is one who follows it in his approach to the issues of living. Methodologically, liberalism is close kin to scientific empiricism and to certain forms of idealistic and rationalistic philosophy. There is a dependence upon reason and on man's capacity as a rational being to solve his problems, accompanied by a tendency to be skeptical toward authority and revelation as sources or criteria of truth. This is related to a strong emphasis on experimentation and ob-

servation as means of learning. A predilection for "nature" and "natural law" as explanatory principles leads to a highly questioning attitude toward everything which cannot be apprehended in their categories.

The use of quotation marks to set off these terms does not indicate here a derogatory judgment but rather suggests that they are used in particular and restricted meanings. "Natural law," in the thought of the nineteenth century, meant generally the pattern of Newtonian physics or Darwinian biology, together with their derivatives and correlates in other areas of inquiry. In our own time, "nature" is quite frequently interpreted in terms of the process metaphysics of Whitehead and his followers. The two terms are, therefore, not identical, but the kinship between them is evident.

Within Christianity, liberalism as method has stressed the historical-critical-literary study of the Bible and other documents. It has laid great stress on religious experience and education as contrasted with acceptance of orthodox dogma or traditional doctrine. It has led to the development of rational and empirical approaches (i.e., historical, philosophical, psychological, sociological) to the phenomena of religion. Ideally, liberalism as a method of religious inquiry repudiates all dogmatism and finalism, especially as regards the content of doctrine. It seeks to approach doctrinal questions or affirmations functionally, endeavoring to discover the significance of particular doctrines for human experience. It is, therefore, open-ended, as opposed to the closed systems of some traditional orthodoxy. It is pragmatic and progressive in its basic outlook on and approach to the problems arising in a religious interpretation of experience and reality.

Third, liberalism often involves a particular *content of doctrine*. The historical-critical-scientific emphasis of liberalism as a method give it a strong thrust toward naturalistic and idealistic theism. In its idealistic form, this philosophical theism is frequently axiological, concerned with the realization and preservation of eternal and spiritual values. God is either the supreme value or the source of all value. To be a Christian means to be devoted to ideals and values such as truth, beauty, goodness, and justice. Concern for the eternal and the spiritual has sometimes led the religious liberal toward a syncretism which has tended to pass rather lightly over the historical and ideological distinctions between religions (e.g., with the thesis that all religions teach fundamentally the same universal and eternal moral-spiritual principles). He has frequently assumed—at times, it is charged, somewhat too uncritically—the value-pattern of some particular religion as the norm by which other religions are judged.



At times this theistic idealism is expressed in personal terms, with "person" and "personality" given axiological or value definitions which are the more "pure" the farther away one gets from the historic theological tradition of Christianity. Thus the thorough-going idealistic philosopher of religion would tend to use "purer" or "stronger" value terms than one who was more directly involved in the forms and usages of traditional theology. Again, liberalism as doctrine has tended to stress the idea of process, as in much current naturalistic theism. Here especially the influence of modern scientific and philosophical evolutionism is evident. The stress on process, in its turn, brings an emphasis on progress, which moves toward becoming a doctrine in its own right as "progressivism."

These axiological, personalistic, and naturalistic emphases lead toward the social idealism and the stress on "building the Kingdom of God" which have played so great a role in recent social interpretations of Christianity. The realization of the Kingdom is then regarded as a possibility, though not necessarily an easy or simple one, within history, so that eschatological aspects of faith tend to be dropped out. An optimistic view of the nature of man and of society leads to religious types of humanism, to self-realization ethics, and to social reformism. On the one hand, this has led the liberal toward a stress on the value of personality and thus toward an emphasis on rights which, accenting personal freedom, has often verged on individualism. On the other hand, it has also led to an emphasis on the individual's right to security which has tended toward various forms of social control and socialism. Moralistic interpretations of sin replace the more distinctly theological definitions of traditional forms of religious thought. A broadly Platonic tendency to reduce sin to error and ignorance is conducive to an equally Platonic stress on man's perfectibility through education and the development of reason.

Fourth, liberalism is associated with a *program of action*. This is closely related to but is not identical with the preceding. The concern for man and for society moves the liberal in the direction of political and social reform and thus restores to religion, it is claimed, the passion for social justice and righteousness which characterized the ancient prophets. Religious liberals have, therefore, been involved deeply in the development of the modern peace and labor movements and in programs of interchurch and international co-operation. Christian liberals have sponsored or supported social legislation such as unemployment insurance, old-age pensions, compulsory health laws, movements for women's rights and children's welfare, the removal of discrimination against racial and other minority groups,

and the like. The concerns and achievements of liberalism in this area present an impressive and important record. In short, religious liberalism as a program of reforming action reveals the emphases and concerns of the social gospel as it developed within Christianity, both Catholic and Protestant, in the past century, and whose influence is still evident in the social concerns and activities of the churches and churchmen in our time.

Fifth, contemporary religious liberalism is *a form of thought and expression*. This aspect is not often separated out, but it needs to be set forth explicitly if certain phases and emphases of the liberal movement are to be understood. In general, liberalism is often characterized by a tendency toward characteristically philosophical rather than toward theologically oriented forms of thought and speech. This is evidenced in the emergence and development of the emphasis on philosophy of religion and in the appearance of the various philosophical theologies of the past century and a half. The contrast between this predominantly philosophical form of expression and that of traditional Christian theology is marked. The preference for the more abstract rational or intellectual modes of expression stands in sharp contrast, too, to the concern for the more concrete "existential" forms favored by those branches of present-day religious thought variously called "biblical theology," "neo-orthodoxy," "Continental theology," or "Christian realism."

This philosophical preference of the liberal leads him to seek to set the propositions of religion in logically neat patterns, in contrast to the more "loose" or paradoxical forms of thought used by many present-day theologians. Closely related to this logical concern is a stress on ethical interpretations of religion and an effort to translate the dicta and data of religion into purely moralistic terms. Also closely tied in is a stress on coherence as the criterion of truth *par excellence*, with a corresponding tendency to move away from pragmatic-utilitarian or consensus criteria. In short—a point often not explicitly recognized in contemporary disputations—modern religious liberalism tends to prefer what may be designated as predominantly "Greek" (i.e., rational-philosophical) rather than "Hebrew" (i.e., personal-existential) forms of thought and expression.

### III. DISTINCTION AND CONFLICT OF MEANINGS

Here, in brief outline, are five discernible meanings of "liberalism" in contemporary religious usage. Even a casual analysis of current discussion will reveal that these meanings are not simply discernible but separable. Although there are strong tendency or probability relationships between

them, as indicated by the overlappings in the descriptions given above, the presence of mutually incompatible factors indicates that they are not necessarily convergent. They do not form a logically implicative series, so that one may not reason validly from the presence of one to that of another.

At this point it is important to note a logical distinction between truth and validity. The latter refers to a formal relationship between propositions such that one "follows" or is implied or entailed by others. Truth or falsity, on the other hand, refers to the material content of the propositions themselves. Material truth and formal validity, therefore, need not coincide: each may exist either with or without the other.

In the present discussion, this means that they who are liberal in any one of the five described senses are not necessarily liberal in others. One who holds to a liberal view of religion as content of doctrine may not be open-minded toward alleged data or truth-claims in conflict with his own formed opinions. He may not be tolerant or generous in attitude toward those who set forth these contrary truth-claims or who give more evidential value than he does to controverted data.

In so acting, however, the professed liberal becomes what he perhaps least thinks or desires to become; namely, he becomes both orthodox and dogmatic, although the content of his orthodoxy and the tenets on which he is dogmatic are not those of any traditional theology. He in fact rejects liberalism in the first or second sense, or both, while affirming it in the third and perhaps in others. What we have in such a case is an illustration of a tragic irony in human existence: the fact that men often become like what they fight or protest against, particularly if they struggle very strongly. The Puritans who sought freedom of conscience in New England and then denied such freedom to dissidents like Roger Williams are paralleled by the liberal who protests against dogmatic orthodoxy and then insists, by attitude and practice if not by explicit statement, that only they who conform to the standards which he sets up or to which he conforms may rightly be termed Christian.

It should be noted, too, that one who is liberal in the first or second sense will not in every case be liberal in the others. The man of generous spirit, or the critical biblical scholar, or the philosophical or scientific interpreter of religious phenomena may be quite conservative on political and economic issues.

On the other hand, he who calls himself a liberal in form of thought and expression may have an illiberal attitude toward those who differ with him on these points. The manner in which many philosophers refer to

theology and theologians is a case in point here. In extreme cases, the preference for the more abstract rational or "Greek" forms of theological-religious expression may amount to what may rightly be called an intellectual anti-Semitism. The professed liberal may not only not use the characteristically concrete-existential "Hebraic" forms of thought and speech, but he may deny both their validity and their value, or he may even emotionally scorn or ridicule them as immature or nonsensical.

In connection with liberalism in this formal sense a serious question arises: What are "equivalent propositions"? Specifically, is it possible for the biblically grounded concepts of historic Christian theology to be translated without loss or remainder into the abstract universal terms and categories of philosophy? This is the crux of much of the argument between contemporary liberals and their opponents.

Defenders of the philosophical tradition in religious liberalism will insist that the basic propositions of Christian faith are so translatable, that otherwise they do not have the logical coherence and cogency necessary for universal validity and significance, and further that by such translation into philosophical categories they are so strengthened and broadened as to be made acceptable to intelligent modern men. It is claimed that only as the data of religious experience and the doctrines of Christianity are interpreted in these terms and categories can they be understood and evaluated by men trained in science, philosophy, and other intellectual disciplines not specifically religious in character. To base religion on faith rather than on reason and proof is to weaken the claims of religion on the minds of men.

Opponents of this philosophical view declare that in the translation of biblical and theological ideas into the categories of the rational philosopher, something of the flesh-and-blood quality of the original is lost. They would agree with William James when he speaks of "the tendency to let religion evaporate in intellectual terms."<sup>1</sup> They ask whether the creative factor of natural process, or the value-conserving element in experience, is a full and adequate substitute for the living God of the biblical revelation. Is Jesus considered simply as the master teacher the full equivalent of Christ the Savior and Lord? Is "respect for personality" or "reverence for life" an adequate translation of "love your neighbor as yourself"? Is preservation or even enhancement of value in all respects the equivalent of eternal life for the soul?

The critic of liberalism may admit that the philosophical restatement

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<sup>1</sup> *Varieties of Religious Experience*, Modern Library edition, 1936, p. 492n.

which the liberal presents is significant for critical purposes and that it is, therefore, not to be cast summarily aside nor treated too lightly. Yet, it is claimed, intellectual clarity alone cannot satisfactorily substitute for the experience of redemption known firsthand, nor can the abstract descriptions or evaluations of the philosopher supplant the personal-existential wholeness symbolized in the often paradoxical forms of biblical-theological thought.

So the issue between philosophical and biblical or existential theology is joined. On each side there are those who declare that no relationship of mutual reciprocity or supplementation is possible: the decision between them is a clear either/or. There are also, however, more moderate ones, also on each side, who recognize the inadequacy of either taken alone and thus affirm the importance and even the necessity of both. Even these, however, may disagree—albeit not so sharply as the others, perhaps—as to the relative role each should play in the formulation of the faith of the Christian in the modern world.

#### IV. A SUGGESTED SOLUTION OF THE CONFLICT

We return now to the question: What is liberalism, and who is liberal?

Any attempt to define a term which in actual usage has several meanings by selecting one of these as normative brings up a question as to why this should be chosen rather than another. An inevitable element of evaluative decision, which involves a degree of volition ("the will to believe," as James termed it), enters whenever any factor or combination is set forth as the norm. The logical fallacy of definition thus always hangs over such a selection. Yet the fact that on purely descriptive bases these terms have a virtual chaos of meanings, the various combinations and permutations of the five designated senses, makes necessary some attempt to get behind this confusion if we are to reach any degree of order and agreement among parties to contemporary theological discussion.

A significant key to the solution of the problem may be found in the distinction between "liberal" as adjective and as substantive. In one of his essays Emerson spoke of the tragedy involved when the man on the farm becomes a farmer—when the job rather than the person occupies the center of concern. Something similar enters into this discussion. The word "liberal," as its form indicates, is primarily an adjective. It describes a kind of spirit, an attitude of a man toward the world and his fellows. Liberalism in the first of the five designated senses is, therefore, primary. But this spiritual attitude must express itself, so that the man



of the liberal spirit must work out its implications in thought and action in relation to other men and the world in which he lives. This gives rise to liberalism as pattern of belief and program of action.

When, however, the descriptive adjective becomes a substantive—when the liberal spirit is not simply related to but identified with a particular method of inquiry or content of doctrine or form of action or expression—a change takes place which is more than merely formal. There then comes into being a new meaning which tends to crowd out the original adjectival meaning of the word. Instead of denoting an inner spiritual attitude, “liberal” then denotes inclusion in groups or participation in programs or adherence to schools of thought. There is, however, a significant difference between saying that “X is a *liberal man*” or “X is *liberal*” and saying that “X is a *liberal*.” The first speaks of the spirit in him; the second identifies him with a particular content or form of thought or action.

There are two ways to avoid bitterness in this discussion involving liberals and their critics. For greatest possible clarity, the word “liberal” might be reserved to denote the first of the five meanings; namely, it might retain clearly its function as spiritually descriptive adjective. By this means, much confusion and acrimony would doubtless be removed from discussion. For in many, perhaps most, cases when liberals and liberalism are brought under criticism, analysis of the argument will reveal that what is criticized is not the liberal spirit but some particular manifestation of other meanings of liberalism. The polemics are usually directed against what are considered a too-optimistic view of man and society, or against an extreme moralistic-philosophical reductionism, or a reliance on empirical methodology which verges on positivism, or a doctrinaire social utopianism or sentimentalism and relativism. One would have to look far to find a responsible nonfundamentalist Christian who condemns the generous spirit *per se*.

These same principles apply, with shift of emphasis, to the one who speaks on behalf of liberalism. For the advocate of liberalism in the sense of doctrine or method or program may assume too readily that these are the forms of expression which the liberal or generous spirit must necessarily assume. The advocate, like the critic, therefore needs to learn to see distinctions in the meanings of the terms which he uses.

The reservation of “liberal” and “liberalism” to designate the first of the five meanings would, of course, greatly restrict the frequency of their usage. It would, however, make for a precision of meaning which would tend to foster the development of a spirit more in accord with what are



commonly held to be basic principles of Christian faith and love than the spirit in which much current discussion is carried on. There will be no argument that the generous spirit is a *sine qua non* of the genuinely liberal Christian. He who does not have this spirit is not liberal in the Christian sense, no matter what his relationship to other meanings of the word "liberalism." He who does have it is liberal in the Christian sense, even though he may neither call himself nor be called by others a liberal with respect to the social or philosophical theories which he holds.

Pragmatically, however, we must face the fact that once several meanings of a word become current in popular speech, it is rarely if ever possible to redeem it by a fiat decision to restrict it to its original or other designated meaning. This implies that the restriction suggested above, desirable as it might be in the abstract, can hardly be expected to be applied in actual debate. There is, however, a practicable alternative which may contribute to both the clarity and the charity of theological debate involving liberals and others. This alternative is so simple that one may be tempted, like Naaman the Syrian, to disregard or even to scorn it. For it is nothing but the suggestion that all parties to theological discussion remember the diversity of meanings of these terms. If this were done, and if pains were taken to clarify the specific meaning or meanings intended in a given discussion, the sharp edge might be removed from argument and thus the way be opened for understanding even when disagreement continues. For it is understanding and not necessarily agreement which, in the final analysis, makes for charity and genuine liberality.

Once again, by a different route, we come back to the desired point. For here too the way is opened for the emergence and development of a more genuinely Christian liberalism—a liberalism which expresses in attitude and act that inner generosity and liberality of spirit which is called in the New Testament *agape* or charity or love. Apart from such a spirit as this, all other forms of liberalism are but dust and ashes.

# Thomas Jefferson's "Fair Experiment"— Religious Freedom

SIDNEY E. MEAD

*"Only in the United States of America has the experiment been tried of applying Christianity directly to man and to society without the intervention of the state."*<sup>1</sup>

ONE OF THE MOST provocative contributions to the current discussion of religious freedom and separation of church and state in this country is buried in the relative obscurity of the final chapter of a book published in 1952 with the innocuous title, *What Americans Believe and How They Worship*. It is provocative because the author, Professor J. Paul Williams, advocates in effect the establishment of a state religion with coercive sanctions.

At first sight this suggestion seems so utterly implausible that it is difficult to take it seriously. But in the context of the subsequent history of what the founders launched as an "experiment," it seems natural enough that some in our period of crisis for the democracy should come to Mr. Williams' conclusion that the "experiment" has not been entirely successful.

It is the purpose of this article, while vigorously rejecting Mr. Williams' proposal that "governmental agencies must teach the democratic ideal as religion," to indicate that it is rooted in some perplexing ambiguities in the American tradition and practice, and hence calls attention to some of the most vexing problems of today.

## I

The legal basis for the practice of separation of church and state in the United States is found in Article VI of the Constitution and the First Amendment. The first stipulates that "no religious test shall ever be required as a qualification to any office or public trust under the United

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<sup>1</sup> Smith, H. B., quoted in Charles Beecher (ed.), *Autobiography, Correspondence, Etc., of Lyman Beecher, D.D.* Harper & Brothers, 1864, I, 345.

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States"; and the second, that "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the government for a redress of grievances."

Obviously these provisions applied only to the officers of the United States, and to acts of the Federal Congress. They in no wise directly affected the Church establishments in those states where they existed at the time, and as late as 1891 a court declared that "the States may establish a Church or Creed, and maintain them, so far as the Federal Constitution is concerned." Only in the twentieth century have the courts by invoking the Fourteenth Amendment made the guarantee of religious freedom for all citizens a matter for the cognizance of the Federal Courts.

## II

The laconic brevity and consequent vagueness of the original constitutional provisions make the question of what was meant by them a problem of the historical interpretation of the founders' motives and intentions in declaring them.

The First Amendment went into effect November 3, 1791. Meanwhile most of the new states had debated, formulated, and accepted new constitutions, and all had faced and solved in one way or another the problem of church and state. But it was in Virginia that the debates had been most pointed and where the outcome was most clearly and decisively for complete separation. Hence it is to the writings of the Virginians that we naturally turn first for an understanding of what religious freedom meant to those who wrote it into the laws.

Out of the Virginia debates came two classic and definitive statements, Thomas Jefferson's "Bill for Establishing Religious Freedom in Virginia," which went into effect early in 1786, and James Madison's "Memorial and Remonstrance On the Religious Rights of Man" of 1784. The conception of religious freedom that emerges from careful study of these statements may be summarized under four heads:

1. It meant that each individual was to be left free to make up his own mind about religion; he was to have liberty to express his opinions freely, and to seek to persuade others to his view; he was to suffer no deprivations or penalties, civil or otherwise, as a result; and he was not to be forced to contribute to the support of any ecclesiastical institution, even to the one in which he believed.

2. "Religion" was defined as one's "opinion" (the key word) about "the duty which we owe to our creator, and the manner of discharging it." The "right" to such opinion was said to be an "unalienable" right, because "the opinions of men" depend "only on the evidence contemplated in their own minds" and hence "cannot follow the dictates of other men." That is, an "unalienable" right is of such nature that one cannot relinquish the responsibility for exercising it even if he wants to. "The care of every man's soul belongs to himself," said Jefferson in his *Notes on Religion*. "The magistrate has no power but what the people gave," and they "have not given him the care of souls because they could not; they could not, because no man has *right* to abandon the care of his salvation to another." Each man must do his own thinking and believing, as he must do his own dying.

3. A church (what was really meant was an ecclesiastical institution) is, as Jefferson put it, echoing almost word for word the definition of John Locke, merely

... "a *voluntary* society of men, joining themselves together of their own accord, in order to the public worshipping of God in such a manner as they judge acceptable to him and effectual to the salvation of their souls." It is *voluntary* because no man is *by nature* bound to any church. The hope of salvation is the cause of his entering into it. If he finds anything wrong in it, he should be as free to go out as he was to come in.

Such a "voluntary society" may, of course, define and set up its own standards, and enforce its own criteria for entrance into membership and for continued fellowship. But "its laws extend to its own members only." And so far as the civil power is concerned, a church, as Roger Williams had said in *The Bloody Tenent of Persecution*,

(whether true or false) is like unto a Body or College of Physicians in a City; like unto a Corporation, Society, or Company of East-Indie or Turkie-merchants, or any other Society or Company in London; which Companies may hold their Courts, keep their Records, hold disputations; and in matters concerning their Society, may dissent, divide, break into Schisms and Factions, sue and implead each other at the Law, yea, wholly break up and dissolve into pieces and nothing

without any interference whatsoever.

4. Finally it meant, as we shall see more clearly below, that the work of these "free" churches is somehow related to "order in government, and obedience to the laws," or, in the eighteenth-century phrase, it contributes and must contribute to the "public welfare."

## III

These views are so ingrained in the American mind that it requires some effort to realize that at the time they were considered a very daring innovation—an experiment worth trying but of uncertain outcome. Yet the evidence seems conclusive enough, as two typical quotations from Jefferson will indicate. In his *Notes on the State of Virginia; Written in 1781* . . . . [and] . . . . 1782, and first published in Paris in 1785, he noted that

Our sister States of Pennsylvania and New York, . . . have long subsisted without any establishment at all. The experiment was new and doubtful when they made it. It has answered beyond conception. They flourish infinitely. Religion is well supported; of various kinds, indeed, but all good enough; all sufficient to preserve peace and order; . . . Let us too give this experiment fair play. . . .

And toward the end of his term as President he was sanguine about the outcome of the experiment on a national scale. In a letter of reply to a group of Baptists in Virginia, November 21, 1808, after commending them for consistently standing among "the friends of religious freedom," he said:

We have solved by fair experiment the great and interesting question whether freedom of religion is compatible with order in government, and obedience to the laws. And we have experienced the quiet as well as the comfort which results from leaving everyone to profess freely and openly those principles of religion which are the inductions of his own reason, and the serious convictions of his own inquiries.

These typical quotations emphasize that leaders like Jefferson considered the practice of religious freedom a great experiment. They also suggest a centrality and stress on the fourth aspect of its meaning noted above, that is all too commonly overlooked. It is not too far wrong to say that for Jefferson the experiment was precisely to find out whether this kind of religious freedom was compatible with "order in government, and obedience to the laws."

At the time it was not at all obvious that it was. It was not obvious because

For more than fourteen hundred years—that is, from a little after the time of Constantine—it was a universal assumption that the stability of the social order and the safety of the state demanded the religious solidarity of all the people in one church. Every responsible thinker, every ecclesiastic, every ruler and statesman who gave the matter any attention, held to this as an axiom. There was no political or social philosophy which did not build upon this assumption . . . all, with no exceptions other than certain disreputable and "subversive" heretics, believed firmly that religious solidarity in the one recognized church was essential to social and political stability.

Hence, as Professor Garrison continues, the declaration for religious free-

dom in the American Constitution constituted "on the administrative side" one of the "two most profound revolutions which have occurred in the entire history of the church."<sup>2</sup>

#### IV

The question naturally arises as to how this momentous revolution in the thinking and practice of Christendom came to be accepted even as an experiment. In answer it is worth stressing first that the Revolutionary leaders came to see that it was practically unavoidable—that if there was to be a *United States of America* there had to be national religious freedom. In 1787 "Congress was shut up to this course by the previous history of the American Colonies, and the actual condition of things at the time of the formation of the national government."<sup>3</sup> The genius of the founding fathers in this matter was not that of the creation of the idea, but rather that of realistic recognition of the "actual condition of things" religious. Looking back on the period we may say in summary fashion that the following conditions were important.

1. Right-wing groups were still most powerful in every area, and not one of them rejected Establishment on principle. But no respectable and powerful religious group, and no possible combination of such groups, was in a position to make plausible a bid for a national Establishment, even had the desire been present. Meanwhile all the religious groups had come to see the possibilities of voluntarism in the churches through their experience during the great awakenings.

2. The desire for an Establishment had been weakened and undercut by the general prevalence of Rationalistic thinking and Revivalistic-Pietistic sentiment even in the existing churches.

3. The real social and political leaders who gave structure to the new political order, were largely Rationalists or Deists, and they renounced Establishments on principle. This was particularly important for the decision against "multiple Establishment," which many found quite congenial at the time, and for complete separation, which only a few of the less influential "sects"—notably the Baptists and Quakers—clearly held on principle.

4. Finally, on the matter of religious freedom, all the religious groups clearly agreed only on one thing, namely, that each wanted for itself the

<sup>2</sup> Garrison, Winfred E., "Characteristics of American Organized Religion," in *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, Vol. 256 (March, 1948), pp. 16-17. Hereafter this work is referred to as *The Annals*.

<sup>3</sup> Schaff, Philip, *Church and State in the United States*. G. B. Putnam's Sons, 1888, p. 23.



complete freedom to propagandize and to work out its own way, and it had become obvious to each that the only way it could get this freedom was by granting it to all others.

How this "condition of things" had come to be, is the matter of the "previous history" of religion in the Colonies, which need not concern us here.<sup>4</sup>

Back of this revolution in practice and hand in hand with it, lay the ideological revolution—the tremendously complex and subtle revolution in ways of thinking which was necessary to make the new practice acceptable even as an experiment. Extensive treatment of this development is unnecessary for our purposes. But one broad characteristic of it will aid our understanding.

All the lines of thinking of the eighteenth century converged on the idea or principle of free, uncoerced, individual *consent* as the proper basis for all man's organizations, civil and ecclesiastical. This meant that belief in enforced uniformity of belief and practice necessarily faded away.

The two live movements of the century which bore the revolution in thinking in their stream were Rationalism and Pietism. Rationalism fostered the idea of individual human autonomy guided by the light of nature and Nature's God, through Reason. "Reason," of course, did not mean merely the process of reasoning, but a basic principle of human nature through which man, the creature, was enabled to read the great revelation of the Creator in His works and to shape his conduct accordingly. The individual was, and could be, moved and guided only by the weight of the evidence contemplated in his own mind—and herein lay his autonomy. Coercion of opinion in the interests of uniformity, Jefferson thought, had served only "to make one half the world fools, and the other half hypocrites."

Pietism in the churches in its own way also fostered an idea of human autonomy—guidance by the light of the peculiar Revelation in Scripture through consciously experienced grace. The individual was and could be moved and guided only by his own personal experience of such grace, and

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<sup>4</sup> There is a very extensive literature on the rise of religious freedom. One of the most inclusive is Anson Phelps Stokes, *Church and State in the United States*, 3 vols., Harper & Brothers, 1950. Another extensive treatment is Leo Pfeffer's *Church, State and Freedom*, The Beacon Press, 1953. For a condensed historical treatment see Everts B. Greene, *Religion and the State: the Making and Testing of an American Tradition*, New York University Press, 1941. A somewhat classic treatment is Sanford H. Cobb, *The Rise of Religious Liberty in America*, The Macmillan Company, 1902. I have found two articles particularly informing: R. Bainton, "The Struggle for Religious Liberty" in *Church History*, X (June, 1941), 95-124; and Perry Miller, "The Contribution of the Protestant Churches to Religious Liberty in Colonial America," in *Church History*, IV (March, 1935), 57-66.

herein lay his autonomy—his independence in Christ. The common thrust of Pietism was toward “no creed but the Bible” and the right of “private judgment” under grace, in its interpretation.<sup>5</sup>

Hence the Pietist did not have the heart, as the Rationalist did not have the head, longer to justify coerced uniformity under Establishment. So during the eighteenth century Rationalists and Pietists could easily combine forces on the practical and legal issue of religious freedom against the defenders of Establishment who took the traditional view of the matter. Professor Sweet’s generalization requires some qualification, but it is not too far amiss. It was, he said,

the leadership of such Lockian disciples as Jefferson and Madison, backed by an overwhelming left-wing Protestant public opinion, that was responsible for writing the clauses guaranteeing religious freedom into the new state constitutions and finally into the fundamental law of the land.<sup>6</sup>

It is important to emphasize in passing that for neither the Rationalists nor the Pietists was acceptance of the principle of free, uncoerced, individual consent an acceptance of guidance through individual whimsey or surrender to the kind of “rugged individualism” that sets the individual over against the community in an antagonistic relationship. It was not this because it was conceived as *consent* to the authority, or authorities, necessary for stability and order in the society—consent, that is, to the necessary discipline and responsibilities.

## V

In this general context we now turn to the important question of the real difference between Establishment and religious freedom—that is, to the essential nature of what Jefferson called the “fair experiment.”

Establishment rested upon two basic ideas or assumptions: (1) That the existence and well-being of any society depends upon a body of commonly shared beliefs regarding the nature of man, his place in the cosmos, and his destiny, upon which are reared the rules for his conduct toward his fellow men in all their affairs. These foundational beliefs are religious.<sup>7</sup> (2) That the only guarantee that these necessary beliefs will be widely enough disseminated and inculcated to provide such a foundation for the society, is to put the coercive power of the state behind the institution responsible for their definition, articulation, and inculcation—at least enough

<sup>5</sup> Nevins, John W., “The Sect System,” in *The Mercersburg Review*, I (1849), 493.

<sup>6</sup> Sweet, W. W., “The Protestant Churches,” in *The Annals*, p. 45.

<sup>7</sup> One of the clearest statements of this is found in Alexis de Tocqueville, *Democracy in America*, New York, 1899, II, 9, 22.

coercive power to compel attendance upon the teachings, and to suppress or cut off dangerous aberrations.

Thus the whole structure rests upon the common interest in "order in government, and obedience to the laws," as Jefferson put it.

Religious freedom did not mean giving up the first idea or assumption, that is, the necessity for the commonly shared basic religious ideas. It meant only the rejection of the second assumption, namely, that the institution(s) responsible for their inculcation must have the coercive power of the state behind it (or them). The essence of the revolution was, then, the rejection of coercion in favor of persuasion alone in religious matters as sufficient to guarantee the popular inculcation of the religious beliefs necessary for the public welfare.

Looked at in this fashion, religious freedom can be seen to have had some very profound and far-reaching implications that perhaps were not too clearly grasped at the time, and certainly seldom are today.

First, from the viewpoint of the society and the state, the following implications were important:

1. There will be a multiplicity of religious groups, or "sects" as the rationalists consistently called them.

2. But each and every "sect" will inculcate in its own way the basic religious beliefs that are essential for "order in government, and obedience to the laws," or, in brief, for the "public welfare." This is what Jefferson thought had been demonstrated in New York and Pennsylvania: "Religion is well supported; of various kinds, indeed, but all good enough; [because] all sufficient to preserve peace and order."

How much Jefferson's somewhat optimistic view was actually based on observation of the experiment in those states, and how much it was the result of imposing his typically rationalistic theory upon the situation, is a moot question. Certainly the rationalists were so imbued with a theory of the "essentials of every religion" that they were prepared to find what they were looking for in each. The eminent Dr. Franklin reflected as an unclouded mirror these sentiments of his rationalistic fellows, when he said in his *Autobiography*:

I had been religiously educated as a Presbyterian; and tho' some of the dogmas of that persuasion, such as the *eternal decrees of God, election, reprobation, etc.*, appeared to me unintelligible, others doubtful, and I early absented myself from the public assemblies of the sect, Sunday being my studying day, I never was without some religious principles. I never doubted, for instance, the existence of the Deity; that he made the world, and govern'd it by his Providence; that the most acceptable service of God was the doing of good to man; that our souls are immortal; and that

all crime will be punished, and virtues rewarded, either here or hereafter. These I esteem'd the essentials of every religion; and, being to be found in all the religions we had in our country, I respected them all, tho' with different degrees of respect, as I found them more or less mix'd with other articles, which, without any tendency to inspire, promote, or confirm morality, serv'd principally to divide us, and make us unfriendly to one another. This respect to all, with an opinion that the worst had some good effects, induc'd me to avoid all discourse that might tend to lessen the good opinion another might have of his own religion; and as our province increas'd in people, and new places of worship were continually wanted, and generally erected by voluntary contribution, my mite for such purpose, whatever might be the sect, was never refused.

Those whose primary interest was in "good citizens," and who could see that even "the worst [sects] had some good effects" in producing them, were prepared to note that "all [sects were] good enough."

3. The limits even of religious freedom are defined by the "public welfare."<sup>8</sup> Apparently the eighteenth-century leaders who fathered the new government with its experiment in religious freedom, did not have to wrestle with any outstanding practical consequences of this view, as generations of later justices had to—notably for example in dealing with polygamous Mormons, or with Jehovah's Witnesses, whose refusal to salute the flag was widely thought to be inimical to the public welfare. Beginning as the founders did with the assumption that the basic religious beliefs they held were merely the essentials of every religion, they naturally concluded that all religious groups teach and inculcate them under whatever peculiar disguise they may adopt. Hence they could hardly envisage a time when some or even all the religious groups might not teach them at all, or might not teach and inculcate them adequately for the support of the public welfare.

Here, then, is a troublesome lacuna in the theory. But it seems a fair conclusion that (since the public welfare was to set the limits even of religious freedom, and the public welfare is a matter for the state to define) the way was left open for the state, if and when it judged that the religious sects were inadequate or derelict in the matter, to defend itself by setting up the institutions or machinery necessary to guarantee the dissemination

<sup>8</sup> Jefferson stated this very clearly in *Notes on Religion*, Oct., 1776 [?]: "Whatsoever is lawful in the Commonwealth, or permitted to the subject in ordinary way, cannot be forbidden to him for religious uses: and whatsoever is prejudicial to the Commonwealth in their ordinary uses and therefore prohibited by the laws, ought not to be permitted to churches in their sacred rites. . . . This is the true extent of toleration." Saul K. Padover (ed.), *The Complete Jefferson*, Duell, Sloan & Pearce, Inc., 1943, p. 945.

R. Freeman Butts (*The American Tradition in Religion and Education*, The Beacon Press, 1950, p. 66) notes that "Washington came to agree with Madison and Jefferson that the value of religious establishments must be subjected to the secular test of the public welfare as well as to the religious test of equality of conscience. More and more conservatives as well as liberals, reluctantly or willingly, came to the same conclusion."

and inculcation of the necessary beliefs. And this seems to be the conclusion to which Mr. Williams has come, as we shall note below.

Second, there were profound implications from the viewpoint of the churches or "sects":

1. The "free" churches accepted, or had forced upon them *on these terms*, the duty and responsibility to define, articulate, disseminate, and inculcate the basic religious beliefs essential for the existence and well-being of the society—and of doing this without any coercive power over the citizens at all—that is, armed only with persuasive power.

2. More subtly, they also accepted by implication the typically rationalist view that only what all the churches held and taught in common (the "essentials of every religion") was really relevant for the well-being of the society and the state. Obversely this meant that they accepted the view that whatever any religious group held *peculiarly* as a tenet of its faith must be irrelevant for the "public welfare."

It is hard to escape the conclusion that thus the religious groups accepted by implication the responsibility to teach that the peculiar views or tenets or doctrines that divided them one from another and gave each its only reason for separate and independent existence, were either irrelevant for the general welfare of the whole, or at most possessed only a kind of instrumental value for it. It is no wonder that a sense of irrelevance has haunted many religious leaders in America ever since.

The rationalists were clear on this point, as the quotation from Franklin above makes obvious. And Franklin exhibited his consistency as well as the implications of his view when he rejected the minister whose sermons seemed aimed "rather to make us Presbyterians than good citizens"—thus saying in effect that you really cannot do both. All the spectacular success of the free churches in America in effecting numerical growth and geographical expansion, insofar as it has been success in making men peculiarly Roman Catholic, Presbyterian, Methodist, Baptist, Lutheran, or what not (as was most generally the goal), has taken place under this Damoclean sword—the haunting suspicion that somehow relevance to the general welfare decreased in proportion to such success. And hence the prevailing and continuous sense of tension in America between the claims of the religion of the public welfare and denominational religion for supreme allegiance.

In pointing to these implications of religious freedom from the viewpoints of the state and of the "sects," we point to the Trojan horse in the comfortable citadel of denominationalism under such freedom in the United States.



## VI

Perhaps the most striking power that the churches surrendered under religious freedom was control over public education, traditionally conceived as an essential aspect of the work of an Established church if it was to perform its proper function of disseminating and inculcating the necessary foundational religious beliefs. Ideally under religious freedom as conceived by the rationalists the free churches might and probably should continue to possess such control, since, dividing the population among themselves, each in its own way would inculcate the basic beliefs (the "essentials of every religion") common to all, and necessary for the general welfare.

But for many and complex reasons this proved completely impracticable in the United States. For one thing, the task was too immense to be supported by voluntary churches that claimed as members only ten to twenty per cent of the total population. And so somewhat by default the state took over directly this traditional part of the work of the church. But if now we ask, why the rise of compulsory free public education for all sponsored by the state, is not the answer that it was precisely to make possible and to guarantee the dissemination and inculcation among the embryo citizens of the basic beliefs essential to the existence and well-being of the democratic society?

And who can deny that these beliefs are religious? Certainly this was clearly recognized by early leaders such as Horace Mann, who frankly stood for "nonsectarian" religious teaching in the public schools. But it was soon discovered that there could be no "nonsectarian" religious teaching in America, precisely because religion had been poured into "sectarian" molds and had hardened in "sectarian" forms. Thus Horace Mann's brand seemed to many evangelical Protestants to be suspiciously "Unitarian," and at best what passed as "nonsectarian" religious teaching seemed to many Unitarians, Roman Catholics, and others to be evangelical Protestantism. Even the Bible was largely ruled out, for it could not be read in the public schools except in "sectarian" English translations.

Here are the roots of the dilemma posed by the acceptance of the practice of separation of church and state on the one hand, and the general acceptance of compulsory public education sponsored by the state on the other. Here is the nub of the matter that is all too often completely overlooked or glossed over. It was very clearly stated by J. L. Diman in the *North American Review* for January, 1876 (p. 40). If it is true, he said,



[1] that the temporal and spiritual authorities occupy two wholly distinct provinces, and that to one of these civil government should be exclusively shut up . . . it would be difficult to make out a logical defense of our present system of public education. [But, (2)] If, on the contrary, it be the right and duty of the state to enforce support of public education . . . [upon all citizens], then our current theory respecting the nature and functions of the state stands in need of considerable revision.

Diman's point is based upon the recognition that of necessity the state in its public education system is and always has been teaching religion. It does so because the well-being of the nation and the state demands this foundation of shared beliefs. In other words, the public schools in the United States took over one of the basic responsibilities that traditionally was always assumed by an established church. In this sense the public school system of the United States *is* its established church. But the situation in America is such that none of the many religious sects can admit without jeopardizing its existence that the religion taught in the schools (or taught by any other sect for that matter) is "true" in the sense that it can legitimately claim supreme allegiance. This serves to accentuate the dichotomy between the religion of the nation inculcated by the state through the public schools, and the religion of the denominations taught in the free churches.

In this context one can understand why it is that the religion of many Americans is democracy—why their real faith is the "democratic faith"—the religion of the public schools. And this prepares one to understand the appeal, and indeed the essential plausibility of Professor Williams' proposal that in order to meet the present crisis "governmental agencies must teach the democratic ideal *as religion*."<sup>9</sup> This is essentially an appeal for a State Church in America, and his arguments for it largely parallel those traditionally used to defend Establishments.<sup>10</sup> Hence they are worth noting as an indication that Americans must now face some of the implications of their practice of religious freedom that they have commonly overlooked.

The bulk of Mr. Williams' book is an examination of "the traditional religions" in the United States which leads him to the conclusion that so far as the public welfare is concerned they largely cancel each other out and are irrelevant. In the last chapter entitled "The Role of Religion

<sup>9</sup> Williams, J. Paul, *What Americans Believe and How They Worship*, Harper & Brothers, Publishers, 1952, p. 371.

<sup>10</sup> See for example Timothy Dwight's "Vindication of the Establishment of the Public Worship of God by Law," Letter v in his *Travels in New England and New York*, and conveniently found in Louis M. Hacker (ed.), *The Shaping of the American Tradition*, Columbia University Press, 1947, I, 258-263.

in American Destiny" he constructs his thesis and delineates the arguments therefor.

1. "... a culture is above everything else a faith, a set of shared convictions, a spiritual entity," and its continued health and well-being depends upon the maintenance of this faith in the hearts and minds of the people. Hence "systematic and universal indoctrination is essential in the values on which a society is based, if that society is to have any permanence or stability." This will be recognized as the first assumption underlying an Established church.

2. In the present crisis, with democracy threatened from all sides "Americans do not even have a clear common conception of what the democratic ideal is," and hence "America runs a grave danger from lack of attention to the spiritual core which is the heart of her national existence."

3. "If we are to avoid this danger, democracy must become an object of religious dedication. Americans must come to look on the democratic ideal (not necessarily American practice of it) as the Will of God or, if they please, the law of Nature."

4. This means the articulation, dissemination, and inculcation of beliefs. And in order to achieve this "it will be necessary to mobilize many agencies" among which "the churches and synagogues are obviously first on the list."

5. But although they are already doing quite a bit to bolster democracy, yet Mr. Williams sees little reason to suppose that they can or will do the job that is necessary on a broad enough scale or fast enough, for "the churches receive but voluntary attention [and that from "but half the population"]; the government may require attention [of "all the population"]. This will be recognized as the second assumption underlying an Established church.

6. "No agency in this country is in as strategic a position as is the public school when it comes to teaching democracy . . . [and] in bringing the majority of our people to a religious devotion to the democratic way of life." Here Mr. Williams falls neatly into the pattern suggested above regarding the public schools.

7. But whatever the specific agencies, "we must find ways to awaken in the hearts of multitudes of Americans a devotion to democratic ideals like the devotion given by ardent believers in every age to the traditional religions," even though this means "giving the power of wholesale religious indoctrination into the hands of politicians. . . ."

8. Finally, what about those, especially in the existing churches and synagogues, who object on one ground or another? Mr. Williams' answer is clear and concise—he steps forthrightly into the way left open by the founding fathers. "But at those points where religion is a public matter, those areas which contain the ethical propositions essential to corporate [public] welfare, society will only at its peril allow individuals and sects to indulge their dogmatic whims."

Religious leaders as well as others all over the United States may well rise in indignation at this invitation to the state from the Chairman of the Department of Religion at Mount Holyoke College to suppress where it deems necessary the "dogmatic whims" of "individuals and sects." But they ought also soberly to recognize the historical roots of his thinking, and to thank him for thus putting this position clearly and concisely at this time. In the context of this article, what Mr. Williams is saying is that Jefferson was overly optimistic in supposing that the various kinds of religion were "all good enough" in respect to the public welfare, and in thinking after only a few years of trial that "fair experiment" had shown that "freedom of religion is compatible with order in government, and obedience to the laws." His position is based upon a correct sensing of some of the implications of the acceptance of religious freedom we have noted above. Hence his work should have the salutary effect of helping to force both political and ecclesiastical leaders to face such implications openly.

# Sectarianism and the Psychoses

SAMUEL SOUTHARD

"DON'T YOU THINK that the preaching of these sects sends people to mental institutions?" Several ministers asked this question when I was a mental hospital chaplain. Laymen asked me: "Do you find many Holiness people in your hospital?"

Similar questions are raised by psychiatrists and psychologists. When a newspaper announced "Revival and Faith Healing," a clinical psychologist asked "What about these sects? Who are the people who attend these meetings?" Later when I sat in a therapeutic conference a psychiatrist asked, "What's the relation of this man's religious preoccupation to his previous religious experience?"

Both careful opinions and blatant assertions have been expressed on the relation of mental illness to sect groups. Feeling runs high in some discussions, for basic attitudes toward religion and the value of religion in mental health are involved. But there has been little systematic analysis or clinical study of this problem. As I reviewed my own experience as a chaplain to mentally ill persons I asked the same question: Is there a relationship between the incidence of psychoses and denominational affiliation?

In attempting to answer this question I have used two sources of information: (1) a general survey of literature on Pentecostal and Holiness Sects; and (2) the story of four members of sect groups to whom I ministered as a chaplain in a mental hospital. I hope that this will help to retain a balance between the abstract generalizations that all of us make about groups of people, and the pastoral concern that we owe to each man as a *personal* creation of God.

## I

In reviewing the literature on Pentecostal and Holiness Sects, I found that sociological and psychological assertions were made about sects by some authors without any supporting evidence. V. F. Calverton related "religious compulsiveness" to the class struggle.<sup>1</sup> H. P. Douglass looked upon

<sup>1</sup> Calverton, V. F., *The Passing of the Gods*, pp. 135, 190, 196.

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sects as an "escape device so that the bewildered stranger may shut himself up in his familiar, backward-facing traditions."<sup>2</sup> He explained the vogue of sects as a response to the preaching of men like a certain "Brother Strakey," who has "a frightened prophet's mentality." "The Jonah temper or psychosis is due in no small part to resentment against bewilderment and frustration experienced in the struggle for status." Dr. Douglass' psychiatric terminology is loose at this point. David Burgess finds the power of "escapist religion" resting upon the biblical ignorance of hearers and their lack of a stable economic life.<sup>3</sup> Sects such as Christian Science are successful because they operate in the "borderland" region of health, according to G. G. Atkins.<sup>4</sup> An early work on *Primitive Traits in Religious Revivals* (1905) located "the most important purely pathological phenomena of superemotional revivals (in) insanity."<sup>5</sup> The author added that "both conversion and religion are in themselves normal and healthful and sane."

The trend of thought in these assertions is that sects are an "escape mechanism" for inadequate individuals. The pressure of economic uncertainty is presumed to be a large factor in the susceptibility of such persons to "superemotional" religion.

A direct contradiction of the connection between economic depression and emotional difficulties was made by Anton Boisen in a study of his home town.<sup>6</sup> He spoke from experience as a mental hospital chaplain: "There is no necessary connection between economic depression and mental illness, except that it is difficult to support non-productive members of the family and find work for improved patients during such times."<sup>7</sup> Economic suffering may bring new faith and fellowship; Pentecostal religion may give such persons the power to reorganize their lives.

Boisen's objection to "Holy Rollers" was on psychological rather than sociological grounds. He felt that their assumption that the divine comes through the unusual was dangerous, for this idea figures in mental illness as well. However, when the experience of the unusual is shared with others it is not so dangerous. Although the Pentecostal lives in a cramped world, almost as small psychologically as that of the psychotic, yet the

<sup>2</sup> *Christendom*, X:101f.

<sup>3</sup> *The Christian Century*, Oct. 20, 1943, p. 1196.

<sup>4</sup> Atkins, G. G., *Modern Religious Cults and Movements*, Fleming Revell Co., 1923, p. 198.

<sup>5</sup> p. 238.

<sup>6</sup> Boisen, A., "Religion and Hard Times," *Social Action*, Mar. 15, 1939; "Economic Distress and Religious Experience," *Psychiatry*, II:2.

<sup>7</sup> *Social Action*, p. 24.

shared fellowship of their church cushions various shocks and is a help to many.<sup>8</sup>

Most writers in the field of the church and social classes do not have Boisen's psychological or sociological training. In fact, many authors are quite naïve on both accounts. Their stories of "sect" meetings have value only as eye-witness accounts of the travelog variety. (Marcus Bach, *They Have Found a Faith*; Charles Ferguson, *The Confusion of Tongues*; William Dixon, *New America*; Charles Braden, *These Also Believe*.) A trained observer, however, can provide excellent psychological material even though he makes no personal comment upon it. Herbert Stroup's observations that children may be considered "enemies" by parents who are Jehovah's Witnesses, that all attacks upon their religion is taken personally, and that these Witnesses believe that the whole world is against them, give more data than all the "travelog" studies.<sup>9</sup>

Some books were written with the hope that sects would come together with a larger ecumenical fellowship (H. C. McComas, *The Psychology of Religious Sects*, 1912, a typological study; A. B. Bass, *Protestantism in the United States*; S. J. Case, *The Millennial Hope*). Others were intended as general reviews of religious life in America (W. L. Sperry, *Religion in America*).

Sociological studies of denominationalism have considered dogma and theology from a historical, sociological, and ethical point of view (Ernst Troeltsch, *The Social Teaching of the Christian Churches*; H. R. Niebuhr, *Social Sources of Denominationalism*). The particular relation of denomination to social class was presented by Liston Pope in *Millhands and Preachers*.

These authors have been careful to distinguish "sect" from "denomination," a distinction not always followed in less sophisticated studies. A study of the move from sect to church can provide much data for a psychological interpretation of the "marginal man." Everett Stonequist pointed up the crisis of this view; the marginal individual, as he is introduced to two cultures, may either form a new social framework or be assimilated into the dominant cultural group. Although Stonequist was interested in racial data, the psychological uncertainty of the marginal man is clear.<sup>10</sup>

In this move from conflict to accommodation, the sect may provide

<sup>8</sup> *Journal of Religion*, 1940, p. 374.

<sup>9</sup> Stroup, H., *Jehovah's Witnesses*, Columbia University Press, 1945, pp. 130-147.

<sup>10</sup> *American Journal of Sociology*, XLI:1-12. See also his *The Marginal Man: A Study in Personality and Cultural Conflict*; Robert Park, "Human Migration—The Marginal Man," *American Journal of Sociology*, 33:881-893; Joseph Fichten, "The Marginal Catholic," *Social Forces*, 32:167-172.



group support to marginal individuals, for sects are also moving toward accommodation and denominational status.<sup>11</sup> The individual with a sense of cultural inferiority, who has lost a sense of belonging to settled society, may find support and new roots in a sect.<sup>12</sup> In this sect society the emotionally starved not only are satisfied, but they are given something to do.<sup>13</sup> Men of many types enter these groups; they want to be different, to enter a new cultural life.<sup>14</sup> There is no evidence, however, for Faris' "sectarian personality."<sup>15</sup>

From a psychological point of view, these sociological investigations reveal the value of sects as a point of contact between society and persons who have lost contact with society. The psychological implication is that such persons might soon lose psychological contact with reality altogether. Although sects may be an escape from some harsh realities, no human beings exist without some escape mechanisms, and in the case of the marginal man, the sect may prevent him from escaping completely from reality into a psychosis.

Some psychological studies have considered the value of sects. Cantril found Father Divine's Heaven to be a kingdom of fear for those who wished to escape, but for those who had lost nothing by transferring allegiance to Father Divine, security and status were provided.<sup>16</sup> C. P. Raycito attributed the change of his mother's allegiance to a Holiness church to the visitation of the Holiness preacher after the death of her husband. She found companionship, honor, and opportunities to relive religious experiences in such a church.<sup>17</sup> R. P. Casey looked upon the emphasis on self-expression as a major attraction to such "transient cults," which he does not define.<sup>18</sup> The keynote appeal in early Methodism was tenderness as it was realized in a family society, the Methodist class meeting.<sup>19</sup>

The only statistical study on "neurosis and religious affiliation" available to this author did not reveal anything significant.<sup>20</sup>

More significant studies have taken into account the relation of culture

<sup>11</sup> Muelder, Walter, *Christendom*, Autumn 1945, p. 462.

<sup>12</sup> Clark, S. D., *Church and Sect in Canada*, Oxford University Press, 1949, p. 433.

<sup>13</sup> Clark, E. T., *The Small Sects in America*, The Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, 1949, last chapter.

<sup>14</sup> Faris, E., "Sects and Sectarianism," in *Personality and the Social Group*, ed. E. W. Burgess, University of Chicago Press, 1929, p. 145.

<sup>15</sup> p. 135.

<sup>16</sup> Cantril, H., *Psychology of Social Movements*, Wiley & Sons, 1941, p. 137.

<sup>17</sup> *Christian Century*, 56:996.

<sup>18</sup> *Psychiatry*, 4:525-534.

<sup>19</sup> Jones, W. Lawson, *British Journal of Psychology*, 1951: 345-54.

<sup>20</sup> Slater, Eliot, *Journal of Mental Science*, 1947: 392-98.

to religious choice. The time factor was considered important by George Wiedeman. In a study of five psychiatric cases, he found that the emotional stress of parental sectarianism conflicting with cultural norms could result in psychiatric disorders in the natural stress period of adolescence. The parents, who had come "out of the world" into the sect, had already passed beyond adolescence and therefore met the conflict with more equanimity.<sup>21</sup>

The relation of religion to psychiatric disorders was also investigated by Wayne Oates. The long-term sectarian conflict, mentioned by Wiedeman, was present in only 17.2 per cent of sixty-eight patients studied in a state mental hospital. A bizarre form of religion was sought by 10.3 per cent of the patients as a "last straw" before they reached the hospital. 51 per cent of the patients had no religious concern at all.<sup>22</sup>

This last study indicates the relation of emotional disturbance to the "marginal man" sociological studies. Those who seek to cross from one culture to another, and can neither go forward nor return, may become psychotic as an escape from social isolation.

## II

On the basis of this brief review it appears that the most hopeful area of investigation from a psychological point of view would not be the one-to-one correlation between hospitalized mental patients and denominational affiliation or participation in a sect. Human beings are too complex for such simple classification. Rather, our investigation should center around the personal crisis involved in a move: (1) from social isolation to sect or denomination, or (2) from sect to denomination, or (3) the reverse of either of these two moves. Although we cannot fathom the depths of the individual soul, we can try to picture what the sect means to a particular person.

In such an investigation, apparent religious conflict must be distinguished from those crises in which religion plays an active role in the precipitation or resolution of the conflict. Many of the authors reviewed in this paper have been misled by superficial observation. The fact that a person changes his church membership is not, in itself, evidence of a personality disturbance. For example:

An eighty-year-old man was admitted to a mental hospital because of constant arguments with his wife and lawyer about nonexistent stocks

<sup>21</sup> *American Journal of Psychology*, 1949: 392-398.

<sup>22</sup> *Journal of Pastoral Care*, 1949: 3, 21-30.

and bonds. Life had been miserable to him. He sought to keep peace in the family by going to a Methodist church with his wife. He expressed some dislike for this church, and stated that he would rather return to the Catholic church. When asked the reasons for this, he said that his first wife, a Catholic, was "an angel," while his second wife is a "devil." Nothing more was said about the change of church membership, for with this statement the old man began to pour out his grief over the loss of his first wife and his conflicts at home.

A middle-aged matron was very upset when she entered a mental hospital. She kept singing "Jesus, keep me near the cross," and other hymns. Several days later, in talking to the chaplain, she told of her joy in singing with a Methodist choir. "But I am originally an Episcopalian," she said. "My husband couldn't stand getting up and down so much in my church, so we joined his."

The change of denomination was not significant in the present illness of either of these patients. In the latter example, religion was a comfort. Her willingness to change churches indicated—in the past—her flexibility and willingness to cooperate with her husband.

Although religion may not be a significant factor in the psychoses of mental hospital patients *in general*, it may be of great significance in *individual* cases. The following discussion will illustrate the relationship of a change in sect or denomination to the personal dynamics of individual patients.

#### THE MOVE FROM SOCIAL ISOLATION TO SECT OR DENOMINATION

Christianity has always sought to bring men out of isolation and into fellowship with God and man (Eph. 2:11-22). The fact that some people fail to achieve that fellowship is a judgment upon the Christian community rather than upon God or the man who yet dwells in the terror of isolation.

We often turn to the church in our time of trouble. If the "trouble" is a crime of which we are convicted, then our isolation is all the more intense. Consider, for example, the loneliness of Charles Gregg, who was transferred to a mental hospital from prison. This man could neither read nor write. He was a rough mountaineer without friends or family. That is, he has no family now, for after he killed his wife, the relatives gained possession of his five children.

Charles killed during a psychotic episode. He talked wildly of "people who were out to git him." But when he had quieted down, a "mountain preacher" visited him in jail. This is the only human contact that he

remembers during that disturbed period. He "gave his heart to the Lord" in jail. As he waited for his trial only the preacher visited him. Daily they prayed and the preacher read the Bible. But when Charles was sent to prison, his preacher was too far away to visit him. Charles began to feel isolated again; he thought that "worldly people" were imprisoning him. He became so suspicious and antisocial that he was transferred to a mental hospital.

In the ward, Charles was delighted to see the chaplain. Here was another "preacher" to whom he could speak. In hushed tones he confessed the greatest desire of his life—to learn to read the Bible so that he would understand the messages sent to him by the mountain people whose sect he had joined. His feeling of acceptance at the hands of this group of people—and the chaplain—appeared to be his only joy in living. The sect was his link with society.

This same feeling of security in a humble fellowship is seen in a sixteen-year-old boy, Fred Longest. A person of dull-normal intelligence, Fred would sit by the radio with his mother and hear the "Fuller broadcast" on Sunday. This had been his only contact with religion until he had the last of several automobile wrecks. His frequent arrests convicted him of the need to "do more for the Lord." Because of his reckless driving, as well as other impulsive actions, he had difficulty in obtaining employment, although he was an obedient worker. His plodding ways were accepted until he would begin to drive a company truck, which he always sought to do. Behind the wheel he seemed to be possessed.

Faced with the necessity of supporting his mother, and finding his employment record growing darker, Fred heard a stirring sermon in his mother's church one night. "The preacher said that he knew there was a young man in the audience who should be working for the Lord. It hit me in the chest and I thought I would fall to pieces," he said. The son of the minister came up to Fred and put his arm around him. "Fred," he said, "do you want to be saved?" "Yes," said Fred, and went down the aisle to kneel at the altar.

Since that time, things have been different for Fred in some respects. When he begins to brag, he stops and asks forgiveness for not being humble. Since he is an unsophisticated person, these statements before customers were sometimes looked upon with disfavor by the owner of the grocery store where he clerked. In his subsequent anxiety, Fred would seek reassurances from his pastor. The pastor was always comforting and reassuring. Fred was told that if he would only pray hard enough, the

Lord would come and speak to him and give him visions. In talking to the chaplain, Fred expressed doubts about having any visions; he felt that such things were reserved for very holy—and smart—men. Nevertheless, he was flattered that the pastor would consider him worthy to have such a visitation from the Lord.

From time to time Fred would borrow a motorcycle and inevitably be caught for speeding seventy miles an hour. His confused behavior upon arrest had caused him to be sent to a mental hospital twice. But each time he is returned to his mother, and to the small independent mission of which he is a member. There he finds the assurance and uncomplicated social structure that meet his limited needs. Instead of moving to a delinquent gang during his first arrest and emotional crisis, he found in a saying of his preacher the personal significance that has bound him to a religious community.

The small, intimate fellowship of a "sect" church is not only helpful to those who are socially isolated before they enter the membership, it is also a powerful influence over those who drift from the fellowship into social isolation. For example, Doug was a member of a Christian Gospel Tabernacle. He had been a leader in youth groups. But during his tour of military duty he grew "nervous." When he returned home he would sit for hours, staring into space. He would not go out or speak to visitors. Suddenly he made a suicide attempt, and was hospitalized. At first Doug would say nothing, but following a course of insulin shock treatment, he began to talk to me. Slowly and haltingly he explained that he had prayed a good deal while at home, but was embarrassed to pray in an open hospital ward. He believed that the devil was responsible for his "nervousness." This interpretation was given him by his pastor on a subsequent visit, but it was already accepted as a fact by Doug.

Following a visit by the pastor of his mission, Doug was much more cheerful, comparatively speaking. He stated that the mission was praying for him, and that he had been praying himself. Several weeks later Doug went home for a Sunday visit. He told me on Monday that he was strengthened by the prayers of the church on his behalf. Now he wanted to get well so that he could find a job and return to his church.

In this instance, Doug felt that he was surrounded by a fellowship of real people during his illness. He was drawn out of social isolation and his protective world of unreality by the common concern of a group of people who were dear to him. Since no one at the hospital had any definite idea of just what caused this young man to be withdrawn in the

first place, few could question the simple effectiveness of a church praying on his behalf. In his time of isolation, the Christian fellowship redoubled their efforts to enfold him in a spiritual bond.

The social isolation of these three men was unbearable. Each of them had developed psychotic episodes which gave them some protection against social isolation, but also increased their withdrawal from society. Only their sect seemed to reach them in their loneliness. Charles found himself accepted as a sinner if he would only repent; Fred gained a sense of personal significance "working for the Lord"; Doug was restored to his former social position because of the warm, accepting attitude of a praying church.

#### FROM DENOMINATION TO SECT

The persons of whom we have just spoken were at the end of their rope. They had run out of personal resources to meet the demands of society and their own conscience. They were forced out to the margin of society, and they found safety only in religious groups which are considered "marginal" in both sociological and ecclesiological circles.

The same personality dynamics, however, may operate in a person who moves from an established denomination to a sect, or from sect to denomination. These dynamics may be harder to demonstrate in the latter move because it is tied in with social mobility.

Although I am very interested in this phenomenon, I am not adequate to describe it clinically, for my own culture is often but a steppingstone for these persons as they travel up the social ladder. Perhaps someone else can describe these persons after they have reached their final destination.

Therefore I choose to describe a move which is more familiar to me, the shift from denomination to sect. In many instances this gives a deep sense of personal satisfaction to the person who makes the transfer. However, in other cases it is a desperate, but unsuccessful attempt to solve the problem of isolation.

Let us take as an example the unsuccessful attempt of a young woman to solve her marital difficulties through allegiance to a sect. A native of Eastern Kentucky, a Baptist, she had gone to Ohio with a Holiness preacher and his wife. There she found work in a laundry. Every night she refused the invitations of other workers to go to a show or to a dance, for this was sin to her. Instead she went to her room in the preacher's home and brooded over her daughter and common-law husband back in Kentucky. As her loneliness increased, she began to think that her fellow laundry workers were trying to "do bad things to her." She was returned to Kentucky



by the Holiness pastor, who was alarmed by her conduct and anxious to free himself of responsibility. Wringing her hands and crying, she was admitted to our state hospital.

Several days after admission she said to me: "Oh, chaplain, I thought I had sinned, and thought it was a conviction of death. I thought every day I was going to die. And worrying about my husband, and about the child. Just little silly things, you know. The devil came in and put evil thoughts in my mind. And I just got to the place I couldn't resist him. After I got free, I guess I was too anxious. I always did want to do a lot for the Lord. I got all tore up. The preacher I was living with, the preacher and his wife, they told me to go home and get some rest. Up there I wouldn't even go to bed."

I said: "Now, how come you decided to go up there?"

She replied: "Oh, well, there was a man came to run a revival. And I was living with a man and wasn't married to him. So this man he preach so strong and the word fired me so strong that I thought I wasn't living right, see. And I repented of my sins and went on to seek the Lord to get the baptism of the Holy Ghost. And I knew I couldn't live with that man and be saved, if I continued to live in adultery, you know."

Her husband would not live with her, she said. He always ran off with other women. But the man she had been living with for two years was a good man. He took care of her children. Although she had left her husband, she had never gotten courage to file for divorce. When a sect preacher came to town she left the Baptist church and heard him nightly. She pled with her common-law husband to help her file for a divorce and marry her. He refused. Then she poured out her woe to the sect preacher. He and his wife persuaded her to go back to their home in Ohio where she could "live without sin" and "find the Holy Ghost." She left with them, but soon was lonely for her "man." Still, she did not want to live in sin. Soon she thought that people were saying that she did live in sin, that she was going out with men.

Several days after our conversation, her common-law husband visited her and promised to help her file for divorce. Then he would marry her. Her mother assured her that her child was well, and that she would have her back when she returned home. In her further conversations with me she began to tell how her sins were confessed to God, and how he had heard her and forgiven her. Now she felt that she could return home and not be "bound up" by her sins. She would not feel isolated from people as an adulteress.

This young woman had found little acceptance in her home religious community. The promise of acceptance and forgiveness, plus the power over her impulses, led her toward a sect. But it was a move that left her stranded from the only security she had left, her common-law husband. Reunited to him by the promise of marriage, she gave up her "holiness" religion and returned to her home. Now that she has a "paper marriage" she feels accepted by the Baptist church.

### III

In concluding this paper I would like to set down a few observations: (1) There is no evidence that membership in a sect, *as such*, indicates poor mental health, nor does entrance into a sect, by itself, signal a personality disturbance. (2) Rather, individuals who are socially isolated may find some redeeming fellowship in a sect, even when their loneliness has led them to the protection of a psychotic episode. In the security of the sect they are willing to give up some of that protection and make some social adjustment. (3) However, sect preachers, through lack of sufficient understanding in certain fields, may sometimes precipitate a psychosis in persons who are already under severe emotional stress.

These general observations cannot cover the wide range of individual differences or uncover the deep riches of spiritual healing that are found in personal religious experience. They are simply yardsticks, which have a way of falling short when we are face to face with the depths of the human soul. Although I believe that what has been said in this paper is true, I feel there ought to be a further study in personal dynamics. Especially in the move from sect to denomination there may be factors which cannot be dealt with as rapidly as we have had to do in the brief compass of this paper. Our generalizations should arise out of reflective observations about the persons to whom we minister. In turn, these "abstractions" must be tested in the crucible of pastoral experience.

# John Wesley and Baptismal Regeneration

PAUL S. SANDERS

I  
JOHN WESLEY WAS NOT a systematic theologian, and we shall not expect to find in his works any carefully wrought doctrine of baptism. His writings were nearly all the by-product of a busy life as a Christian preacher. Some of the treatises were frankly pieces of propaganda, and the sermons were written, not primarily to expound theology, but to convince listeners of the necessity of being justified through faith and brought to a new life of righteousness in Christ.

This is not to say that Wesley was not interested in theology; he seems to have understood quite clearly that religious experience must be guided and criticized by close and careful adherence to fundamental doctrines. His rather numerous remarks on the "catholic spirit" and his noted preference for brotherliness over speculative correctness of doctrine must not lead one to suppose that he was indifferent to the claims of Christian thought.

Because he once said, "As to all opinions which do not strike at the root of Christianity, we think and let think,"<sup>1</sup> some, inclining to indifference themselves, have interpreted Wesley as a latitudinarian. The opposite is, as a matter of fact, the truth, as a careful interpretation of even this one sentence shows. With those doctrines which are the "common, fundamental principles of Christianity" he allowed no trifling.

Still, Wesley was no profound or systematic theologian. He had not the time, nor likely enough the inclination, and perhaps not the gifts for the production of long, serious, scholarly works on doctrine. Yet he was as well trained in theology as any of his contemporaries, and better than most. He read the Bible in its original languages constantly. His *Journal* is full of notations that he was reading the Church Fathers, Luther, Calvin, Pearson on the Creed, Bishop Bull and the other seventeenth-century Anglicans, and the works of his own contemporaries. Hardly the daily

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<sup>1</sup> "The Character of a Methodist," *Works* (American ed., from the 3rd English ed.), New York, 1853 (1831), V, 241.

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diet of a man who considers theology irrelevant to the main business of saving souls!

Modern Methodists who like to say that "it makes no difference what a man believes as long as he lives right" are less in step with their founder than apparently they think. Wesley was genuinely concerned that Christians hold right beliefs. To forget this is to ignore the plain fact that "his preaching and his writings were largely of a doctrinal character, and, if we had nothing but his sermons, we would have a great and comprehensive body of divinity."<sup>2</sup>

But there is not a great deal of material on baptism in Wesley's works. This may have been expected. He would have had little occasion for preaching on it. Most of his hearers had been baptized already; and in any case Wesley was not seriously concerned with baptizing them. The instances of his doing so are so rare as to exclude the notion that he considered it a normal part of his mission. Such persons as needed baptism would ordinarily have been directed to parish church or Nonconformist chapel. Wesley was not founding a new sect; he came not to baptize but to preach the gospel of salvation through faith. Yet there are rather frequent references, many of them of an incidental sort, to this sacrament; and from the more important of these one can begin to reconstruct Wesley's beliefs concerning Christian baptism.

## II

In 1756 John Wesley revised and issued under his own name a treatise published by his father, the Epworth rector, in 1700. Entitled *A Treatise on Baptism*, it may fairly be taken as setting forth Wesley's own views.<sup>3</sup> It should be noted that Wesley never repudiated this tract, and included it in the definitive collection of works which he prepared for the press in the latter years of his life.

The most significant part of this treatise is the second section in which, characteristically, Wesley defines baptism in terms of the benefits which are to be found in it.

First, in baptism we receive the "washing away the guilt of original sin, by the application of the merits of Christ's death." All mankind is under the condemnation of the disobedience of Adam. Infants as well as adults, in the view of the primitive church and the English Church, are

<sup>2</sup> Neely, T. N., *Doctrinal Standards of Methodism*, New York, 1918, p. 73.

<sup>3</sup> "Treatise on Baptism," *Works*, VI, 12-22. It originally appeared as a section of Samuel Wesley's work entitled *The Pious Communicant Rightly Prepared*. Quotations here cited are from p. 14.

"obnoxious to both the guilt and punishment of Adam's transgression." Baptism is the "ordinary instrument of our justification."

Agreeably to this, our Church prays in the baptismal office, that the person to be baptized may be "washed and sanctified by the Holy Ghost, and, being delivered from God's wrath, receive remission of sins, and enjoy the everlasting benediction of his heavenly washing;" and declares in the rubric at the end of the office, "It is certain, by God's word, that children who are baptized, dying before they commit actual sin are saved." And this is agreeable to the unanimous judgment of the ancient Fathers.

To realize the seriousness with which Wesley understood baptism to be a means of canceling the guilt of inherited sin, one must understand the seriousness with which he believed all men to be naturally sinful. Eighteenth-century intellectuals argued that men were not inherently sinful, but were rather by nature wise, virtuous, and happy.<sup>4</sup> Anglican Arminianism, as represented by some of the most notable divines, had come close to saying that there was nothing wrong with man which he could not of himself set to rights with the aid of reason, strong moral effort, and the exercise of faith, this latter being usually viewed as also a work of man.<sup>5</sup>

Against both these positions Wesley contended, insisting on the seriousness and the universality of natural, inherited human depravity. His sermon on "Original Sin," despite its title, is less concerned with the origin than with the actuality and the universality of inbred sin.<sup>6</sup> Every man stands under a condemnation of inherent sinfulness, and no man, apart from the grace of God, in the gift of faith, is able to turn from inherent sinfulness to a life of righteousness and peace. Indeed, in this sermon Wesley very nearly overstates his case, so black a picture does he paint. It is man as he would be, completely apart from the grace of God, whom one sees depicted here. But in fact man is never completely apart from grace; Wesley makes this very clear in his teaching on prevenient grace, about which more will be said later on.

All men, then, are infected with the hideousness of Adam's sin. The first benefit of baptism is that the guilt of inherited sin is removed. From this natural state of sin, condemnation, and misery, man needs to be saved. This can be effected only by the free mercy of God through the death of

<sup>4</sup> Bolingbroke, for instance, said, "Let us be convinced, however, in opposition to atheists and divines, that the general state of mankind in the present scheme of providence is a state not only tolerable but happy." (Quoted in *Wesley's Standard Sermons*, ed. by Sugden, W. H., London, 1921, II, 210, note 2.)

<sup>5</sup> Bishop Bull is found saying, "Justification signifies that love of God, by which he embraces those who are already leading a holy life, and determines them to be worthy of reward of life eternal through Christ." (*Harmonia Apostolica*, p. 7; in the Library of Anglo-Catholic Theology, Oxford, 1844).

<sup>6</sup> Sermon XXXVIII in *Standard Sermons*, II, 207ff.

his Son. This is what is promised, symbolized, and sealed in the sacrament of baptism.

Wesley does not say so here, but it may be inferred from his total theology that even though baptism is thought to remove the guilt of original sin, it does not remove the punishment of it; man is still subject to the misery of the human condition.<sup>7</sup> Fear, pain, sorrow, and death are not removed, at least on the natural plane of life. Moreover, baptism is not to be thought of as sanctification. God does not overcome man's freedom: he may, and will, commit actual sin after baptism, precisely because he has been given the freedom to cooperate with, or else to controvert the grace of God.<sup>8</sup> Sin after baptism shows that baptism has not canceled the possibility of sin.

Second, "by baptism we enter into covenant with God."<sup>9</sup> As circumcision sufficed to enter the Jews into the Old Covenant, so baptism enters us into "that new covenant, which he promised to make with the spiritual Israel."

Since Wesley always insisted that baptism is for infants as well as adults, or rather, is primarily for infants, this entering into covenant relationship with God cannot be interpreted in the sense of believers' baptism. It is not the sectarian but the Catholic interpretation of baptismal covenant which is intended.

Third, "by baptism we are admitted into the church, and consequently made members of Christ, its head." By it we are "mystically united to Christ, and made one with him." "From which spiritual, vital union with him, proceeds the influence of his grace on those that are baptized; as from our union with the Church, a share in all its privileges, and in all the promises Christ has made to it."

Fourth, baptism makes us children of God. Wesley's words at this point undoubtedly teach baptismal regeneration.

By baptism, we who were "by nature children of wrath," are made the children of God. And this regeneration which our Church in so many places ascribes to baptism is more than barely being admitted into the Church, though commonly connected therewith; being "grafted into the body of Christ's Church, we are made the children of God by adoption and grace."

Quoting John 3:5, he goes on,

<sup>7</sup> This point is actually worked out by Wesley with regard to justification, not baptism. But accepting for the moment that Wesley thought of baptism as regeneration, then what he actually held with regard to the concomitants of justification may be predicated as the results of baptism. Cf. Cannon, W. R., *Theology of John Wesley*, New York, 1946, pp. 195f.

<sup>8</sup> Compare the preceding note; also, Cannon, *op. cit.*, pp. 134ff.

<sup>9</sup> This and subsequent quotations are from the "Treatise on Baptism," *Works*, VI, 14-15.



By water, then, as a means, the water of baptism, we are regenerated or born again; whence it is also called by the Apostle, "the washing of regeneration." Our Church therefore ascribes no greater virtue to baptism than Christ himself has done. Nor does she ascribe it to the outward washing, but to the inward grace, which, added thereto, makes it a sacrament. Herein a principle of grace is infused, which will not be wholly taken away, unless we quench the Holy Spirit of God by long continued wickedness.

It should be noted how closely what Wesley says in this connection about baptismal regeneration parallels what he later was to say concerning conversion as justification.

Fifth, "in consequence of our being made children of God, we are heirs in the kingdom of heaven."

Herein we receive a title to, and an earnest of, "a kingdom which cannot be moved." Baptism doth now save us, if we live answerable thereto; if we repent, believe, and obey the Gospel: supposing this, as it admits us into the Church here, so into glory hereafter.

These five benefits are really one, and they add up to regeneration. In baptism the guilt of inherited sin is taken away, so that we are no longer children of wrath but are children of God; we have been entered into a covenant relationship with God, initiated into the church, "engrafted into Christ," and made inheritors of the everlasting kingdom. In short, baptism offers salvation; though, admittedly, we must live as becomes those who profess to be children of light.<sup>10</sup>

There are passages in some of the sermons which either teach baptismal regeneration or which at least flatly state that such is the teaching of the English Church, with the implication that Wesley agrees with this. In the first paragraph of the sermon, "The Marks of the New Birth," Wesley writes as follows: "That these privileges [i.e., of being born again, being a child of God], by the free mercy of God, are ordinarily annexed to baptism (which is thence termed by our Lord in a preceding verse, the being 'born of water and of the Spirit') we know. . . ." <sup>11</sup> They knew it because it was the common teaching of the Church of England. Article XXVII is fairly explicit on the point, and the standard commentators on the Thirty-Nine Articles are agreed that the English Church teaches bap-

<sup>10</sup> Against this uncompromising statement of baptismal regeneration many Methodists have rebelled. Dr. J. H. Rigg, doughty opponent of everything sacramental in Wesley's teaching, sought to minimize Wesley's position by emphasizing that this tract was really old Samuel Wesley's in the first place, and that in any case it teaches baptismal regeneration "after the mildest type of the doctrine, and much as it had been taught by the Puritan divines of the Church of England." (Rigg, J. H., *Churchmanship of John Wesley*, London, 1886, rev. ed., p. 42.) When John Emory edited the third English edition of Wesley's *Works* for American publication, he added a deprecating footnote to this section of the "Treatise on Baptism," apologizing for "some expressions, in relation to the doctrine of baptismal regeneration, which we at this day should not prefer." (*Works*, VI, 15, note.)

<sup>11</sup> Sermon XIV, in *Standard Sermons*, I, 283.

tismal regeneration. The whole of "classical" Anglican theology is instinct with the same teaching.

The liturgical office of Infant Baptism is even more explicit, being full of phrases whose plain meaning is that baptism confers regeneration. After the actual baptism an exhortation to thanksgiving begins, "Seeing now . . . that this child is regenerate and grafted into the body of Christ's Church. . . ." The thanksgiving prayer itself praises God that he has been pleased to "regenerate this infant" and "receive him . . . by adoption" into the church. A final rubric declares that baptized children, dying before they commit actual sin, are undoubtedly saved.

There is a remark in Wesley's tract, "A Farther Appeal to Men of Reason and Religion," which echoes the passage in the sermon just cited. He said, "Infants, indeed, our Church supposes to be justified in baptism, although they cannot then either believe or repent."<sup>12</sup> He then goes on: "But she expressly requires both repentance and faith in those who come to be baptized when they are of riper years."

In the sermon entitled "The New Birth," after insisting upon the necessity of evangelical conversion, Wesley yet goes on:

I do not now speak with regard to infants; it is certain our Church supposes that all who are baptized in their infancy are at the same time born again; and it is allowed that the whole Office for the Baptism of Infants proceeds on this supposition. Nor is it an objection of any weight against this, that we cannot comprehend how this work can be wrought in infants. For neither can we comprehend how it is wrought in a person of riper years.<sup>13</sup>

Wesley is thus found making a distinction between the religious experience of infants in baptism and that of adults in conversion. In the next sentence he goes on to say: "But whatever be the case with infants, it is sure all of riper years who are baptized are not at the same time born again."

This same distinction is made exceedingly clear in the "Farther Appeal." There Wesley wrote:

Baptism is the outward sign of this inward grace, which is supposed by our Church to be given with and through that sign to all infants, and to those of riper years, if they repent and believe the gospel. But how extremely idle are the common disputes on this head! I tell a sinner, "You must be born again." "No," say you: "he was born again in baptism. Therefore he cannot be born again now." Alas, what trifling is this! What, if he was *then* a child of God? He is *now* manifestly a child of the devil; for the works of his father he doeth. Therefore, do not play upon words. He must go through an entire change of heart. In one not yet baptized,

<sup>12</sup> "A Farther Appeal to Men of Reason and Religion," *Works*, V, 38.

<sup>13</sup> Sermon XXXIX, in *Standard Sermons*, II, 238.

you yourself would call that change, the new birth. In him, call it what you will; but remember, meantime, that if either he or you die without it, your baptism will be so far from profiting you, that it will greatly increase your damnation.<sup>14</sup>

### III

Wesley's sensitive awareness of the prevailing profligacy of his times and his unswerving insistence upon the sinfulness of human nature and the necessity of turning from the fruits of sin to the gifts of the Holy Spirit raised for him in a most critical fashion the question of the relationship between baptism, conversion, and regeneration.

In the same sermon in which he had stated that the Church teaches that baptism and regeneration are "ordinarily annexed," Wesley's essentially pragmatic outlook is asserted toward the end.

The question is not, what you was made in baptism (do not evade); but, what are you now? . . . Say not then in your heart, "*I was once baptized, therefore I am now a child of God.*" Alas, that consequence will by no means hold. How many are the baptized gluttons and drunkards, the baptized liars and common swearers, the baptized railers and evil-speakers, the baptized whoremongers, thieves, extortioners? What think you? Are these now the children of God? <sup>15</sup>

Farther on in the same sermon he continues:

Lean no more on the staff of that broken reed, that ye *were* born in baptism. Who denies that ye were then made children of God, and heirs of the kingdom of heaven? But, notwithstanding this, ye are now children of the devil. Therefore, ye must be born again. . . . And if ye have been baptized, your only hope is this,—that those who were made the children of God in baptism, but are now the children of the devil, may yet again receive "power to become the sons of God" . . .<sup>16</sup>

In the sermon on "The Great Privilege of Those that are Born of God," there is a passage in the same vein.

And, in general, from all the passages of holy writ wherein this expression, "the being born of God," occurs, we may learn that it implies not barely the being baptized, or any outward change whatever; but a vast inward change, a change wrought in the soul, by the operation of the Holy Ghost; a change in the whole manner of our existence; for, from the moment we are born of God, we live in quite another manner than we did before; we are, as it were, in another world.<sup>17</sup>

Returning to the sermon "The New Birth," we find Wesley explicitly saying that "baptism is not the new birth: they are not one and the same thing."<sup>18</sup> In both the Catechism of the Established Church and

<sup>14</sup> "A Farther Appeal to Men of Reason and Religion," *Works*, V, 36. Italics Wesley's.

<sup>15</sup> Sermon XIV, in *Standard Sermons*, I, 295. Italics Wesley's.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, I, 296f. Italics Wesley's.

<sup>17</sup> Sermon XV, in *Standard Sermons*, I, 300.

<sup>18</sup> Sermon XXXIX, in *Standard Sermons*, II, 237.

the Larger Catechism of the Westminster Assembly, the definition of a sacrament, he says, clearly distinguishes between the outward sign and the invisible grace, so that baptism, the sign, is spoken of as quite distinct from regeneration, the thing signified. Common sense, he continues, should tell anyone that internal and external things are not the same. He concludes, "As the new birth is not the same thing with baptism, so it does not always accompany baptism: they do not constantly go together."<sup>19</sup>

Wesley's comments on relevant passages of the New Testament tend to affirm the view that baptism and regeneration are not to be equated. On the *locus classicus* for baptismal regeneration (at least for the exegesis of former days), John 3:5, Wesley has the following to say: "Except he experience that great inward change by the Spirit, and be baptized (wherever baptism can be had), as the outward sign and means of it."<sup>20</sup>

In revising the Anglican Articles for the Methodists in the United States, Wesley omitted from the Article on Baptism the portion indicated, and made the few verbal changes noted here by italics.

Baptism is not only a sign of profession, and mark of difference, whereby Christian men are discerned from others that be not christened; but it is also a sign of regeneration, or new birth, whereby as by an instrument, they that receive Baptism rightly, are grafted into the Church; the promises of forgiveness of sin, and of our adoption to be the sons of God by the Holy Ghost, are visibly signed and sealed; faith is confirmed, and grace increased by virtue of prayer unto God. The Baptism of young children is in any wise to be retained in the Church, as most agreeable with the institution of Christ.

Baptism is not only a sign of profession and mark of difference whereby Christians are *distinguished* from others that are not *baptized*; but it is also a sign of regeneration or *the* new birth.

The baptism of  
young children is to be  
retained in the church.

The significance of Wesley's emendation is not immediately apparent. In his terminology respecting the sacraments there is usually little difference in meaning between "sign," "seal," "means," "channel," and "instrument." All these words are to be found in numerous instances in his works. Moreover, he clearly believed the Eucharist to be not only a bare sign but an effectual instrument of grace.<sup>21</sup>

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, II, 238.

<sup>20</sup> *Notes upon the New Testament, loc. cit.*

<sup>21</sup> Cf. the Eucharistic hymn, No. 72. On the Eucharistic hymns, see Rattenbury, J. E., *The Eucharistic Hymns of John and Charles Wesley*, London, 1948. On Wesley's doctrine of the Lord's Supper, see Bowmer, J. C., *The Sacrament of the Lord's Supper in Early Methodism*, Westminster, England, 1951.

Baptism is declared in the American article to be a "sign of regeneration or the new birth." Wesley had clearly shown in his sermons that the sign is not the thing itself. Given this understanding of the matter, and with the proviso, "they that receive Baptism rightly," as in the English form, there would not seem to be much difference in saying that it is an "instrument" whereby the promises of God and our adoption are "visibly signed and sealed," and in saying that it is a "sign of regeneration."

It may be that Wesley was less interested in the subtleties of theological debate than in providing a sound, reasonable standard of belief for his "desolate sheep in America." He revised the Articles to accord with the general tenor of his preaching on justification by faith; he left it to others to argue over the details.

That this may have been the case may be inferred from his treatment of Article XVI, where "Of Sin after Baptism" became "Of Sin after Justification," with no other significant change. He was driving home his main point that what matters most in a man's spiritual career is not his baptism but his being justified by faith.

In the Baptismal Office Wesley expunged several expressions of the idea of baptismal regeneration, notably in the exhortation on the Gospel lesson, and in the introduction to and the final prayer of thanksgiving.<sup>22</sup> The rite was still capable, even so, of being interpreted as teaching baptismal regeneration. -Subsequent revisions of the Office have been chiefly concerned to whittle away, phrase by phrase, one or another instance of such language. This would indicate that later American Methodists were not convinced that Wesley had erased, as some writers claim, every trace of baptismal regeneration from the rite.

#### IV

Did Wesley, then, believe and teach baptismal regeneration or not? The *Treatise on Baptism*, which he never repudiated, clearly teaches that doctrine. Other writings, chiefly sermons, show that Wesley understood the English Church as teaching it, and intimate that he too accepted it. His familiar insistence that he never departed from any essential of the Church's doctrine would bear this out.<sup>23</sup> The revision of the Articles and the Baptismal Office furnishes no unequivocal evidence. Those who profess to find this doctrine in Wesley have much on their side.

On the other hand, several of the most characteristic sermons insist that baptism is not the same thing as regeneration, that the two do not

<sup>22</sup> Cf. Harmon, Nolan B., *Rites and Ritual of Episcopal Methodism*, Nashville, 1926, pp. 159ff.

<sup>23</sup> Whether Wesley did or did not depart from Anglican doctrine is another matter at this point.

always go together, and that in any case, baptism or no baptism, a man must undergo a genuine and radical experience of evangelical conversion. Those who say that Wesley did not believe and teach baptismal regeneration would therefore seem to have much on their side.

The fact is, Wesley's teaching is not at all clear and conclusive. He has done rather more to muddle the situation than to clarify it. Still, some sense may be made of the problem. It is clear that the word "regeneration" is being used in two senses. Anglicans who teach baptismal regeneration look upon regeneration as a work wrought by God through the agency of the Holy Spirit by means of sacramental grace; but it is, as it were, a preliminary, even a negative work of grace. The guilt of original sin is canceled; the individual is placed within the covenant, initiated into the church, and infused with a "principle of grace" which, with his own active co-operation, is expected to suffice him in his later battles with sin.<sup>24</sup>

Wesley looked upon regeneration more pragmatically. It is not enough to say that one has been regenerate in baptism; the more important question is, are there now fruits of the Spirit? Regeneration implied for Wesley being "born again," which meant a subjective change of heart and will. True, this was also wrought by God through the agency of the Holy Spirit; it was precisely at this point that Wesley stood on the "very edge of Calvinism." But there was this difference: conversion was a process of which the subject was conscious and aware, and which was made possible only on condition of man's free co-operation.<sup>25</sup> Until a man had experienced such rebirth and knew the Witness of the Spirit, he was not actually, pragmatically regenerate, whatever benefits may have already accrued to him as a result of prior baptism.

W. J. Sparrow Simpson has made this same point with reference to the term "born again."<sup>26</sup> When Wesley used the term he invariably meant by it actual evangelical conversion, a "subjective change of will." When Wesley's Anglican critics used the term, they meant by it a regeneration in baptism which was an "objective gift of grace." Wesley did not deny an objective work of grace, even to an infant who could not know what was being done to him. But for Wesley the important thing was that in the case of all men, grown to the age of personal accountability, and guilty of actual sin, there must be such a work of grace as consciously sets

<sup>24</sup> Cf. Wesley's statement, "I believe till I was about ten years old I had not sinned away that 'washing of the Holy Ghost' which was given me in baptism; having been strictly educated and carefully taught that I could only be saved by universal obedience, by keeping all the commandments of God; in the meaning of which I was diligently instructed." (*Journal*, ed. by Curnock, N., London, 1909, I, 465.)

<sup>25</sup> Cf. Cannon, *op. cit.*, pp. 105ff.

<sup>26</sup> Sparrow Simpson, W. J., *John Wesley and the Church of England*, London, 1934, p. 30.



a man in another direction, turning him from the indulgence of sin to the pursuit of holiness.

Perhaps, then, Wesley believed both in baptismal regeneration and in the necessity of a consciously-known new birth. Infant baptism would be interpreted as canceling the guilt of inherited depravity. Man would still be subject to the tendency toward sin, and, living in a world where both nature and the whole of mankind is infected with the evil of the Fall, must inevitably, as he grows beyond childhood, fall into actual sin. There is then no deliverance from the power of sin save in a conscious experience of justification by faith. Meanwhile, the baptized person has, if he does not by his own free actions destroy it, citizenship in the Church Militant, and finds himself in the context where salvation is the most likely to be ultimately realized.

## V

As a matter of fact, however, Wesley's total theology precludes our assigning even this role to infant baptism. For although he believed in universal depravity, he also insisted upon prevenient grace.<sup>27</sup> One of the main points in Wesleyan Arminianism is the insistence that there is in every man something of the grace of God, which has, through the virtue of Christ's atonement, overcome the guilt of original sin. Man has not been left hopelessly to wallow in guilt, sin, and despair. The death of Christ effected a universal objective atonement, which paid the penalty of Adam's guilt.

Man is born into a world which is itself suffering the punishment of Adam's guilt; living in such a world, he is infected with the residuum of the original taint of sin which makes it impossible for him not to sin, when he becomes a responsible agent, until he be justified. But individual man is not born into the world with the guilt of Adam's fall on his soul. He is not hopelessly fallen; he is not wholly void of the grace of God. He has the power to grasp the proffered gift of faith which is justifying. He has the power to co-operate with God in his salvation, to the extent of responding to God's initiative in the offer of justifying grace to all mankind. He is, one may fairly say, *born* "regenerate" in the sense in which Anglicanism taught him to be regenerated through baptism. The objective work of grace has been accomplished by the death of Christ, for all mankind. Salvation is "free in all, and free for all."<sup>28</sup>

<sup>27</sup> Cf. Cannon, *op. cit.*, pp. 100ff.

<sup>28</sup> Cf. the sermon on "Free Grace," No. LIV, in *Sermons on Several Occasions* (ed. by Jackson), New York, 1831, Vol. I.

Each man has had given him such a measure of grace as puts him in the position of being able to choose whether or not to accept God's further grace, for justification, sanctification, and perfection. Man must work out his own salvation.<sup>29</sup> This does not of course mean striving through one's own efforts to become acceptable to God; Wesley had tried that and knew that it had failed. It means exercising one's free choice to accept the gift of faith; it means, therefore, that every man is in fact in the position of being able to co-operate with God in his salvation. This is the result of Christ's atonement; it is true whether one has been baptized or not.

It is not baptism, therefore, but the fact of Christ's universal atonement which places man in that preliminary state of grace where guilt has been canceled, and where he can, in time, through the help of preventing grace, reach forth for that crucial work of grace which effects his regeneration as justification.

Wesley himself did not apply his characteristic Arminian position to the doctrine of baptism.<sup>30</sup> It may be that he was never called upon to work out his position systematically, and so never made an effort to bring all his various strands of teaching into the strictest logical harmony. In any case, Wesley was well aware of the suitability of baptism as a symbol and proleptic act signifying the incorporation of the individual into the "realm of redemption," where, it might be ardently hoped and confidently expected, the individual would so come under the influence of grace that he might in time experience the positive work of justification.

Wesley's general position with reference to means of grace would hold with respect to baptism. The means of grace are just that—means; and one must not trust the means, but only Christ. But, on the other hand, one does not despise the means because they are means and not grace itself.<sup>31</sup>

Moreover, there is an element of expectant co-operation necessary for the right use of means of grace, which is implied in willingness and eagerness to obey all known commands of the Lord. As Jesus himself did not scruple to receive baptism at the hands of John, so we must learn a "holy

<sup>29</sup> Cf. the sermon on "Working Out Our Own Salvation," No. XL, *Ibid.*, Vol. II.

<sup>30</sup> This was done rather better, though not explicitly, by John Fletcher. Cf. "An Appeal to Matter of Fact and Common Sense," in his *Works* (American ed.), New York, 1833, III, 332. Later American Methodism worked this point out in more detail, though with rather more characteristic Arminian emphases than the Wesley-Fletcher type of Arminianism. See, for instance, Hibbard, F. G., *Christian Baptism*, New York, 1841; and "The Moral Condition of Infants," *Methodist Quarterly Review* (New York), XLI, 4 (October, 1859), 632-649.

<sup>31</sup> Cf. Sermon XII, "The Means of Grace," in *Standard Sermons*, I, 237ff.

exactness in the observance of those institutions which owe their obligation merely to a divine command."<sup>32</sup>

Finally, it may be suggested that what was left of Wesley's teaching on baptism, after excluding the notion of baptismal regeneration, might still serve as an opening wedge in the development of a meaningful concept of this sacrament. Baptism is a symbol, seal, and proleptic instrument of man's adoption into covenant relationship with God through Christ in the church. While baptism is not regeneration, and in no sense guarantees salvation, yet the assumption is that where baptism is entered upon with sincerity, either by an adult or by parents for their child, there is a better chance of one's coming under and remaining under those influences of grace which should work finally to his salvation than in the case where baptism is carelessly or obstinately omitted.

For all his emphasis upon individual conversion, Wesley did not underestimate the importance of the church in the covenant of grace. Baptism is meaningful as initiation into the church and incorporation into the "mystical body of Christ." Wesley's comment on Roman's 6:3, when fully amplified, will furnish a clue to the direction in which his teaching on baptism might best have been expanded.

In baptism we, through faith, are ingrafted into Christ; and we draw new spiritual life from this root, through His Spirit, who fashions us like unto Him, and particularly with regard to His death and resurrection.<sup>33</sup>

<sup>32</sup> *Notes upon the New Testament*, comment on Matthew 3:15, 16.

<sup>33</sup> *Notes upon the New Testament*, loc. cit. Cf. the interpretation of baptism, especially with regard to infant baptism, given by Flemington, W. F., *The New Testament Doctrine of Baptism*, London, 1948.

## Ministering to American Families Overseas

ROBBINS W. BARSTOW

RECENTLY I RECEIVED an urgent letter from a concerned mother in Iowa, whose son had accepted a business position in another country. He and his bride were about to sail for a two-year term, and the mother wondered what they might find in the way of church life over there. Would there be services in the English language and Christian fellowship for these young people who had been active in church life all through their school and college days? Or would they be more or less orphaned, spiritually, while away from their normal home surroundings?

This letter pinpointed an important aspect of our total church responsibility by its reference to one category of overseas Americans who have received too little attention on the part of most of us here at home. We all know at least something about our missionaries, and 'through our benevolent giving we are privileged to help support them in their varied types of work, evangelical, medical, educational, and social, among many different peoples in all parts of the world; and we all know about our armed forces abroad, and are glad to think of the devoted chaplains, who are sharing in their dangers and ministering to their spiritual welfare.

Too few of us, however, have given thought to the thousands of civilian citizens living in other countries, in the midst of other cultures. They are engaged in a wide variety of activities, diplomatic, technical, commercial, and professional. Many of them have their families with them, particularly if their assignments or operations are of several years' duration. Most of them are concentrated in the principal cities of Latin America, Europe, the Middle East, and the Far East, with lesser numbers in lower Africa.

These individuals and groups represent the United States in cross section, coming as they do from all parts of this nation and setting up American homes and community interests wherever they find themselves

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located. In fact, these persons interpret to other nations the culture and standards of American life more directly and more effectively than do the radio broadcasts, the propaganda booklets, and the other official attempts to "make friends and influence people." They are flesh-and-blood realities as they are seen on the streets and in the shops, and what they say and do and are is carefully noted.

For these reasons, it is most enheartening to realize that in half a hundred such situations there has been a sort of coagulation of earnest Christian men and women who have been keenly conscious of the importance of religion in their own lives and in the lives of their children. They have felt the need for the cultivation of their own spiritual experience and have been glad of an opportunity for quiet public witness by their observance of Sunday and their conduct throughout the week. They have been led to organize interdenominational Protestant Sunday schools and preaching services in the English language and, often from small beginnings, there have developed substantial congregations, many of which now have their own union church buildings and full-time pastors. The earliest of these were in Beirut (1829), Istanbul (1847), Mexico City (1867), and Bogota (1868), and the story is far from finished, for new congregations are even now in process of organization in a number of places.

Sometimes it is asked why there should be separate churches for these overseas Americans. "Why," some say, "should they not worship with the local congregations?" The first answer has to do with language, for most of these families are on limited appointments and do not master the local tongue so that they are sufficiently at ease with it to profit by sermons or services of worship. A second answer has to do with educational levels and cultural compatibility. For the most part, the preaching to national Protestant congregations has a different focus and, even if language were no barrier, the services would hardly be mentally stimulating or spiritually satisfying to the American families who in the nature of the case represent a higher than average level of education and a very different general cultural background. This difference is even more significant in the area of religious education for the children.

It should be added quickly, however, that the existence of separate English-language churches does not mean a complete separation, nor does it imply any superiority complex. The missionaries who are working with the nationals in so-called "mission areas" are usually active in the life of the American Union Churches and form one link with the body of local Protestant believers. English-speaking nationals are welcomed at services

of worship and social events and form another link. There are many such in almost every foreign city, including individuals who have studied in the United States and had connections with church and youth groups or have at least studied in missionary colleges and have a good command of English. Furthermore, the Union Churches often give very generously through their benevolent budgets to local Protestant programs or institutions, and sometimes even take over a particular project for full or partial support as an expression of their fellowship in Christ. Thus, there is very definite integration in the various aspects of church life.

By and large, however, there seems to be sound justification, amply sustained by the experience of the years, for churches especially designed to minister to the Americans and other English-speaking individuals in these distant and scattered locations. In many instances, it is an Anglican or Scottish or other chapel, established in the era of Britain's far-flung colonial empire and commercial expansion, which serves the entire English-speaking community. In fact, when I was in Baghdad, the following paragraph appeared in the weekly calendar of St. George's Mesopotamian Memorial Chapel, which is ably served by Archdeacon Roberts and welcomes all Americans:

It is uplifting to see the various nationalities and Christian denominations attending this church. Here we emphasize our agreements. We are all far from home: long may it be that our church is one where we can come together as a group of Christians and realize our common heritage. I am deeply conscious of this growth of unity and family spirit among us. It is a source of strength to the Church of God.

One is tempted to interpolate that if this gracious spirit were more prevalent at home as well as abroad we would surely feel a more rapid movement toward fuller ecumenical understandings.

An analysis of these Union Churches would be interesting. I myself have visited nearly two score of these strategic spots in the last fifteen months. In set-up and program they vary widely, all the way from the American Church in Paris with its extensive institutional activities for many different groups such as students, service men and women, Scouts, and others, across the full range of church life to small companies in out-of-the-way places, meeting only occasionally in a home or a mission chapel for an English language service when a missionary or visiting minister is available. Many of them have organizational patterns and schedules of events quite like the average church here in the States—women's groups, men's clubs, fellowship suppers, adult Bible study courses, and even annual bazaars!



Some of the churches serving the entire English-speaking constituency are sponsored by a denomination, usually one having active missionary work in that area. In this case, whether or not it is called a Union Church, it follows the denominational pattern as to membership, by-laws, and general polity, and the minister is appointed by, or at least is a member of that denomination. But most of the Union Churches, whatever the name, such as American Church, Community Church, Protestant Fellowship, or some other, are organized as independent congregations, with their own constitutions and by-laws, usually reflecting common denominators in the thought and experience of the churches from which the original members came. In many instances statements of faith and polity have been written, drawing freely and richly from many sources, but emphasizing in all cases the most widely accepted essentials of Protestant belief and practice, and avoiding emphasis upon matters which still cause so much division.

In point of fact, these Union Churches are more inclusive in their fellowship than any existing ecumenical organization, bringing together in harmonious spiritual unity representatives of almost every line of tradition or strain of faith, fundamentalist, conservative, moderate, or liberal. In such alien surroundings, and often in circumstances that are tense and difficult, the differences in creed or manner of worship which split our home communities into overlapping and competing parishes fall properly into the background. Episcopalians and Baptists, Lutherans and Congregationalists, Methodists and Quakers, Orthodox and Pentecostals, Presbyterians and many others, discover that in Tehran or in Athens, in Tokyo or Manila, the common faith in Christ Jesus as Lord and Savior that unites Protestant Christians is vastly more significant than the inherited variations of phrasing or interpretation or liturgical custom that kept them apart back home.

It would be dangerous and unfair to attempt any comparison or evaluation of these many overseas churches, for each one has grown out of and is especially adapted to local conditions. From my own recent observation, however, I venture a comment on the American Church at Caracas, Venezuela, as one outstanding example. In addition to its own normal program which keeps its pastor and its minister of education very busy, this church has appointed a third staff minister to serve three of the oil settlements to the east. Over and above this extension work, the Caracas church is giving very generously to help in the resettlement of refugees and other immigrants from Europe through the program jointly sponsored by the World Council of Churches and the Lutheran World Federation.

I would mention also the Lago Community Church at Aruba, Netherlands West Indies, which has a church school of which any church might well be proud, enrolling over 500 children, some 95 per cent of the nominally Protestant girls and boys in the settlement, and with unique equipment by way of separate open-air patios for the various departments. One is tempted to extend the catalog by mentioning that the Union Church in Tokyo has received more than a hundred new members in the past year, many of them on first profession of faith. Many other churches deserve citation, did space permit.

Indicative of the vigor of these overseas congregations is the fact that within the past few years, mostly through local resources sacrificially contributed, the war-destroyed sanctuaries in Manila, Tokyo, and Kobe have been replaced or restored. New church edifices have also been erected, with a minimum of outside assistance, in Monterrey, Mexico; in Gamboa and in Margarita in the Canal Zone; Guatemala City; La Lima, Honduras; and Sao Paulo, Brazil. To reach back a bit further we must include Caracas and Aruba. Splendid building programs are now in process or contemplated for the near future by the Union Churches in Mexico City; Lima, Peru; Rio de Janeiro, Brazil; and Bogota, Colombia. The church at Bad Godesberg in Germany occupies a beautiful new interfaith chapel, the Stimson Memorial, erected by the State Department for the use of Protestant, Catholic, and Jewish groups within the HICOG community, for, of course, in any assemblage of North Americans there are Roman Catholics and Jews, as well as Protestants, and some, alas, of no faith at all.

One hears much in these days of the unpopularity of Americans abroad and the lowering esteem in which the United States is held. Anybody who travels much becomes painfully aware of this. There are many and varied reasons or explanations for these regrettable attitudes. Probably the major factor is the wealth and strength of this nation, which is bound to stir up envy and a measure of fear. A great world power is never loved by lesser nations. Another factor is rooted in postwar policies of the United States or, perhaps more accurately, procedures. Without being unduly critical, it is pretty generally recognized that some of the things we have done and the unilateral ways in which we have done them have not been calculated to build friendship and international admiration.

Then we must remember that too large a proportion of the movies which this country sends abroad gives a disgustingly distorted picture of American life, gun-play and seduction being the two principal themes. Furthermore, personal attitudes and actions of Americans are frequently

such as to repel, rather than to attract. Government officials, businessmen, and tourists have too often displayed a spirit of coarseness in their lavish spending, their drinking, gambling, and other personal habits. These matters of conduct all reflect adversely upon the nation and the Christian tradition which we like to feel is our foundation.

It is against this negative background that the importance and the wholesome influence of these Protestant Union Churches stands out the more clearly. Their very existence means that there are many United States citizens for whom religion really has a priority value. Thank God that there are so many, diplomats and businessmen as well as teachers and missionaries, who endeavor to be truly Christian in their thinking and their living! They themselves recognize the need for the cultivation of their own spiritual experience. Over the years, the initial planning of services of worship and programs of religious education has always been by way of local "spiritual spontaneous combustion," not something demanded of them, or even suggested, by outsiders or "statesiders."

In the light of all this, it can be seen that these Union Churches, whether large or small, mean several things. First, they help their own members to be at their best. Their services of worship serve to "maintain the spiritual glow." A United States ambassador, with a long and distinguished career, said to me, "I have always noticed a difference in the morale and the whole quality of the life of the American community in places where there is a strong Union Church." One of these churches, which has just completed its first year with a full-time pastor, reports that "the church is full almost every Sunday now, and the feeling of unity and real Christian fellowship is greatly strengthened in the American community." Of course, that is a universal experience, the Church providing guidance and strength for the followers of Christ and, also, offering wholesale social opportunities for mutual encouragement as well as enjoyment within the frame of reference of Christian standards.

Then, in addition to the benefits to the individual members of such congregations, one cannot measure the positive influences that reach out into the city and the nation. The very fact that people of natural prestige because of position and personality place their religion in the forefront of their thinking and living is a powerful witness. Men and women whose Christian faith is vital always radiate a wholesomeness that is the best possible counteragent to the adverse factors previously mentioned. In all candor, many observing persons have remarked that the daily walk and conversation of a lay Christian abroad may be far more effective in spread-

ing the gospel than the direct preaching of an evangelist. Perhaps it is not too much to say that some of the most telling Christian witness in non-Christian lands is being given indirectly and sometimes even unconsciously by the men and women who are sincerely expressing their faith in their own lives, whether in business or in governmental offices, or as wives and mothers, or whatever their occupation may be.

In conclusion, let it be said that these Union Churches merit greater recognition than they hitherto have had. The Department of American Communities Overseas of the National Council of Churches is the channel through which cooperatively, in addition to many direct personal contacts, the home denominations are expressing their interest and concern. As has been indicated, most of the churches are independent and congregationally governed. They call their own pastors, and too high praise cannot be given to the men who, whatever their own denominational background and standing, are serving unselfishly and so successfully these interdenominational parishes.

Through this Department this network of isolated Protestant congregations, many of them in a predominantly Roman Catholic or non-Christian environment, is being welded into a free association for mutual helpfulness. Specialized service is being rendered them, such as assistance in finding pastors, or the securing of educational and program materials. Ministers of families which are going abroad on any governmental or business assignments are urged to acquaint such people with these Union Churches and, simultaneously, to let the Union Church pastors know of the coming of new families.

In addition, this Department is also seeking financial assistance for special situations where local personnel and resources are not adequate. It might be in the matter of a major building project for which some outside help is needed, or, in some cases, a local group might require some subsidization for a year or two to enable it to have a full-time pastor to organize the congregation more effectively and bring it to the point of self-sufficiency. The fact that most of these churches have become financially independent is one of the strongest arguments for assisting the others toward that goal. There are few ways in which comparatively minor investments of consecrated money will show such effective major results so quickly.

Important as has been the influence of these Union Churches in the past, conditions today and in the foreseeable future give them a role of even greater significance, with the increasing numbers of Americans going abroad under technical assistance programs or for private reasons. As we

in the Protestant churches here at home are striving to bring the patterns of our community and national life more into line with the Christian ideal, we are meanwhile being interpreted abroad by these thousands of unofficial ambassadors. The Union Churches are one of the finest means possible for trying to make sure that the men and women who represent us in the eyes and the minds of the world are encouraged and assisted to represent us at our best, as true disciples of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

*Note:* A Directory of English-speaking Union Churches around the world may be had upon request from the Department of American Communities Overseas, 257 Fourth Avenue, New York 10, New York.

## Book Reviews

**The Christian Hope and the Second Coming.** By PAUL S. MINEAR. Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1954. 220 pp. \$3.50.

**Jesus and the Future. An Examination of the Criticism of the Eschatological Discourse, Mark 13.** By G. R. BEASLEY-MURRAY. London: Macmillan & Co., 1954. (New York: St. Martin's Press.) xi-287 pp. \$5.00.

1. The second book listed represents the kind of study of detail which contributes to our total understanding of the early Christian hope. We have here an admirably comprehensive investigation of Mark 13. Not least valuable is the full summary with liberal quotations of the whole modern history of its treatment. The view first clearly developed by Colani in 1864 that we have to do here with a "little apocalypse" put in the mouth of Jesus has remained the focus of discussion ever since. The author shows that the theory was largely motivated by a wish to relieve Jesus of fanaticism and to dissociate him from apocalyptic ideas. Later exponents have differed as to whether the "fly-leaf" in question was of Jewish or Christian origin; as to the extent of editorial alterations; as to the historical allusions found in it (for example, Caligula's intention to desecrate the Temple); and as to the inclusion of genuine sayings of Jesus in the discourse as we now find it.

A strong recent tendency has set in, represented by scholars like Lohmeyer, Kümmel, T. W. Manson, R. H. Lightfoot, and Vincent Taylor, to deny the older view. It is fairly clear that we do not have anything like a full-orbed apocalypse here, even *in petto*. The discourse has rather the character of a paraenesis or exhortation. It looks like a combination of Jewish apocalyptic sayings with words of Jesus and utterances of early Christian prophets. Once it became recognized that Jesus' outlook was eschatological it became plausible to ascribe the whole to him. F. Busch observed that Mark 13 is an explication of Mark 8:34 through 9:1.

The author then proceeds to argue for the genuineness of the discourse. He insists, rather unsatisfactorily, that Jesus did not refuse the kind of signs here proffered; that Jesus could have predicted the events to come here announced; that he expected a considerable lapse of time before his parousia; that the destruction of the Temple and the Last Judgment were seen in conjunction by him in accordance with the laws of "prophetic perspective"; and that the privacy of the teaching to the four disciples is no evidence that Mark viewed the teaching as a post-Easter disclosure.

All these matters are presented with great care and the appendices of the book take up particular cruxes with further thoroughness. One can agree that the fly-leaf theory is today on the defensive and that the chapter is much more at home in Mark's whole portrait of Jesus than has been usually realized. But the case for the genuineness of the discourse is far from convincing to the reviewer. It is tied up with assumptions about the dependableness of Mark's tradition which would itself have to be justified. Nevertheless, the book will be an essential tool to anyone concerned with this chapter. The distinctiveness of the Christian eschatology, moreover, becomes clear as well as the relation of this example of it to others in early Christian literature.

2. The volume by Professor Minear, one of the members of the Advisory Commission on the Theme of the Second Assembly, will be of special interest in



connection with the Evanston discussions. Readers will find here valuable background studies and orientation to the main themes in the various reports on the Christian hope. These chapters are particularly rich in actual scrutiny of the Bible itself as well as in illuminating consideration of some of the chief handicaps we face as moderns in attempting to grasp the outlook of the New Testament writers.

The book is divided into two parts. The first part, "The Structure of the Christian Hope," is especially concerned to show what is distinctive in it. "Hope has a triple reference. It springs from a source, it seeks an object, it has the wings of wishing." So much for hope in general. But where secular hope stresses human wishing and has multiple and shifting goals, Christian hope has a unitary character, resting on God, nourished by his gifts and directed to his goals the character of which has already been disclosed. The Bible speaks of hope in thoroughly personal terms; gathers up all our hopes into "the one hope of our calling"; sees its future aspect in relation to past and present; and refuses to dissociate hope from faith and love.

Four chapters develop these themes in combination with New Testament studies: the hope of the resurrection, to which Paul appeals before Festus; the hope against hope of Abraham, invoked by Paul in Romans; the quickening of hope by spiritual gifts; and the figure of the anchor in Hebrews.

The second and larger part of the book deals with the Return of Christ. In an introductory chapter the defects of the views on this topic of both fundamentalism and modernism are suggested. A word study of the Greek term for "hope," noun and verb, leads to the conclusions that (1) the future goal is "the consummation of an activity that began in the past"; that is, "the expectation of a 'second coming' is everywhere continuous with what has been transpiring"; and (2) emphasis falls not on the visible return of Christ but on what happens then or is associated with it.

The remaining chapters take up various facets of the biblical representation of the coming of Christ and constitute a very valuable and unique set of studies. At the same time they combine to deepen and to Christianize our understanding of the doctrine of the parousia. Professor Minear selects such features as "The Clouds of Heaven," "The Defeat of the Dragon," "The Earthquake," and "The Keys of Heaven," and builds up by the help of the Old Testament a picture of the associations and connotations of each in such a way that their real significance and that of the parousia as a whole are made vastly more meaningful. We enter into the mind of the men of the Bible. We learn that we are not confined to either a literal or a symbolic interpretation (understanding this latter in the vague way commonly intended). These images were part of a total pattern of experience. We can only do justice to them as we enter into that pattern.

Some of these last sections are perhaps less convincing than others. The section on Christ as the thief who devalues our securities and so dispossesses us is not clearly related to the New Testament passages in question. The ramifications of the image of nakedness in the Bible are worth exploring, but whether Mark had this context in mind in connection with the young man who fled at the arrest of Jesus is doubtful. Dr. Minear might well offer or return this idea to Austin Farrer, for this kind of correspondence is his specialty. One can also wonder whether the mere mention that Jesus went out of the Temple should be read in terms of the fateful departure of the Lord from his house.

The best feature of the book is that it initiates us deeply into all that lies back of the idea of the parousia and the Judgment. Thus it makes impossible any merely

wooden or literalist view. But it also stops us if we tend to reject the biblical imagery impatiently. Like many biblical theologians today the author is so concerned to bring out the peculiarity of the Christian hope that he may seem to lump together all natural or secular or human hopes as incompatible and delusory. The hope against hope that rests in God alone, the hope in the Cross that begins where all other hopes fail us: this is understandably the center of the Christian message. But, granted that, can we not then unfold and apply the principle to all genuine devotion and striving? Sometimes it seems today that our experience of false hopes has been so tragic that we find it best to fall back upon our ultimate hopes alone. This emphasis may be central—but our question is as to whether it is comprehensive.

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**Christian Worship.** By GEORGE HEDLEY. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1953. xiv-306 pp. \$4.50.

There are many books available on the conduct of public worship. There are some on its history. There is no book which so comprehensively and interestingly covers the historical backgrounds, practical problems and underlying principles of Christian worship as does this volume by the chaplain of Mills College.

The author is a Methodist, with a liturgical interest which will lead some readers to brand the book as "high church." If one puts away a potential prejudice at this point, he can read with delight and profit, and come away with a deeper respect for the need of giving to the Lord "comely praise."

After an initial look at the reasons why worship is indigenous to all religion the author surveys the backgrounds of Christian worship in the Jewish Temple and synagogues, the gatherings of the early church, the eucharistic prayers and symbolic acts which became the Mass, the creation of liturgical forms for the daily offices, the changes introduced by the English Church. Then came the reaction against ritual in American Protestantism, and the return to it which the author sees not as mere formality but as the recapturing of authentic notes in a great tradition.

The physical surroundings amid which worship is experienced have much to do with the channels through which God can speak to the soul. Dr. Hedley gives a chapter each to church architecture and to Christian symbolism. He makes it clear that it is not mere prettiness, but appropriateness and depth of meaning, that really matters. He illustrates what he says on church architecture by photographs of six beautiful churches and chapels in the San Francisco Bay area and by a number of line drawings of ground plans. Those of us who know George Hedley personally and his sly wit can hear him speak as he protests the "anAkronism" of "the nadir of unchurchly churches . . . the 'Akron plan'" (p. 41), and deplores (p. 26) having seen, in one large Methodist church replete with candles and cross placed on the altar below the central pulpit, the janitor nonchalantly stroll down the side aisle just before the beginning of the service to strike a match on the seat of his trousers and light the candles!

Dr. Hedley's discussion of the Christian year will be illuminating to many who are too prone to see in it only Christmas, Good Friday, and Easter. One learns, for example, that "Low Sunday," the first after Easter, has a historic reason for being so called. "This may have been a corruption of *Laudes*, from the opening word

of its sequence hymn, but it seems sadly appropriate as reflecting the very obvious slump that affects so many congregations after the Easter mood of victory" (p. 82). Pentecost is "Whitsunday" because of the white robes traditionally worn by candidates for baptism, and he regrets the fact that "not always is the coming of the Holy Ghost remembered, and sought, as it ought to be by those who so much need his inner strengthening" (p. 82). Not all readers will find as much value as he in following the traditional year with its assigned lectionaries, but there is food for thought in the observation that "the old wearisome question of 'what to preach about' frequently will find a ready and creative answer in the calendar" (p. 85).

There are equally suggestive and informative chapters on the structure of the Sunday service of worship with the plea that it should not be "jerry-built" but "fitly framed together," on church music, on the pastoral prayer, and on the selection and reading of the Scripture, which ought to be the "lesson" it has traditionally been called and not merely an incidental adjunct to the minister's homily. The author has a high regard for preaching that is straightforward in its proclamation of biblical, theological, and ethical truth, but he makes it clear that the sermon is not designed chiefly to exhibit the preacher's rhetorical skills.

The service of Holy Communion is discussed with much historical knowledge and Christian insight. While I agree with him that more frequent observance of this sacrament would not only be a means of grace but help to eliminate the dislike and discomfort caused by unfamiliarity, I am unable to go with him in advocating its weekly celebration. But if at this point the author seems too tradition-bound, his chapter on life's deep moments "from cradle to grave"—baptism, joining the church, weddings, funerals, personal devotions, and family worship—is full of contemporary relevance to what every pastor, and almost every Christian, must confront.

A particularly valuable feature of the book is the Appendix. In this the author includes an extensive annotated bibliography, the listing of the fixed and variable dates of the Christian year, a comparison of various liturgies including the Methodist ritual for the Lord's Supper, a list of topics of sermons preached by request in the Mills College chapel, and two sample services of worship from the same source.

My reaction to the book is very largely though not wholly favorable. There is not too much stress on dignity and form, but there is proportionately too little on spontaneity in worship. In spite of the bibliographies which the author must have consulted, there are no footnotes by which one may pass judgment on his sources. Unfortunately, he makes the erroneous statement that the Methodist *Book of Worship* is out of print. [Ed. Note: The publishers have inserted an *errata* slip on this in their new copies.] On the whole, however, the book represents both wide knowledge and true insight, and it cannot fail to do much good.

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**The Birth of Christianity.** By MAURICE GOGUEL. Translated from the French by H. C. Snape. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1954. xviii-558 pp. \$7.50.

Professor Goguel of the Free Faculty of Protestant Theology in Paris, now in his seventieth year, can look back upon a long and fruitful life of scholarship. With nearly a score of books to his credit, as well as a hundred articles in various periodicals and about six hundred book reviews (so the *Bibliographia Gogueliana* indicates, which

was drawn up for Anton Fridrichsen's *Coniectanea neotestamentica*, Vol. X), Goguel would doubtless consider as the most significant of all his work the trilogy on "Jesus and the Origins of Christianity." The first of these three volumes, his *La vie de Jésus* (1932), was translated into English immediately (*The Life of Jesus*, 1933). The second, *La naissance du christianisme* (1946), has had to wait eight years to appear in English. The third volume, on *L'église primitive* (1947), still awaits translation.

In the volume under review Goguel maintains his reputation for wide learning, detailed research, and a certain Gallic literary charm. His vast erudition never disturbs the flow of his argument, and the reader, even when he disagrees, is continually stimulated by the multiplicity of fresh combinations and interpretations of the evidence.

The narrative of Goguel's *Life of Jesus* concludes with the crucifixion and burial of our Lord. Part One of this second volume opens with a consideration of the belief in the resurrection of Jesus. It is perhaps the least satisfying section of the book. Here Goguel retails the results which he had reached in 1933 in his volume on *La foi à la resurrection de Jésus*. He takes the view that somehow the disciples, "after being disheartened by Jesus' death, regained their courage. . . . They began to think of Jesus not as dead but as living" (p. 74). Thereupon, first one, then another experienced an appearance of Jesus, and on the basis of these visions it was deduced that the tomb must be empty. In support of this psychological explanation, Goguel must not only magnify the significance of what he regards the legendary elements in the resurrection narratives, but must also invent additional difficulties in the accounts.

For example, he attempts to show that there were two traditions concerning the burial of Jesus, one referring to what he calls a ritual burial, and the other an honorable burial (pp. 30ff.). The former was concerned only with the removal of Jesus' body from the cross before sundown, lest the commandment in Deuteronomy 21:23 be violated. For such a burial of criminals abandoned by their friends and relatives there was no need to mark with accuracy the place of burial. With utter disregard of his sources and quite oblivious to the *a priori* probabilities in the case of Jesus, whose friends were concerned for both ritual and honorable burial, Goguel declares that what he chooses to call the earlier tradition involves a type of burial which would have supplied no motive for remembering the place of entombment. One can easily understand why Goguel wishes to believe this: if granted, it follows that no verification of the declaration that the tomb was empty was ever possible (p. 36)!

In Part Two, which deals with "The Failure of Christianity to Develop in the Framework of Judaism," Goguel considers the early growth and later decline of the Church at Jerusalem. He has a low estimate of the reliability of the early accounts in Acts regarding the election of Matthias, the events of the Day of Pentecost, and the account of Ananias and Sapphira. Perhaps the most satisfactory sections are those which treat of the traditions concerning the *desposunoi* (Jesus' relatives).

In Parts Three and Four, Goguel turns to Hellenistic Christianity and deals particularly with Paul and the conflict between Jewish and Gentile Christianity. Here Goguel is at his best. With masterful conciseness, he sets forth the complex strands of Pauline theology. He denies that Paul formed his soteriology by transforming an oriental mystery religion and replacing Mithra or Attis or Osiris with

Jesus (p. 250). Contrary to many who find little concern in the Epistles for the historical Jesus, Goguel thinks that a careful examination discloses many allusions by Paul to the life of Jesus and to his sayings (pp. 247f.). Nor is it correct to regard the Apostle as the second founder of Christianity (p. 195).

The concluding parts of this broad and comprehensive volume deal with the history of the stabilization of Christianity, the formulation of its doctrine as reflected in the later books of the New Testament and in the works of selected Apostolic Fathers, and the reactions in civil and religious surroundings when Jew and Gentile were confronted with the preaching of the Gospel. Here, as earlier in the book, are many brilliant reinterpretations of historical and literary material.

Among smaller details, one observes that Goguel (with Harnack and Streeter) thinks that the Lucan form of the Lord's Prayer originally contained the petition, "May thy Holy Spirit come upon us and purify us" (p. 264); that the reference to *porneia* in the Apostolic Decree (Acts 15:20, 29) refers to marriage within degrees prohibited by Jewish law; that the Apostle John was martyred early; that the present abatement of "the Mandaean fever which seized a whole school of criticism" is to be viewed with gratification (p. 351).

There can be no doubt that Goguel's work will be consulted for years to come as a stimulating and classic treatment, of its kind, of *The Birth of Christianity*.

A paragraph should be added regarding the translation and the printing of this book. The Reverend H. C. Snape, who is the vicar of Whalley, England, has turned out a most creditable rendering. Without being slavishly literal, he has conveyed in our English idiom much of the vigor and verve of the original. Only occasionally does one meet with unidiomatic English; e.g., "It appeared very early on;" (p. 115, where the French is, "Cette croyance apparaît de très bonne heure"), and "It centres round an expectation" (p. 102), where the preposition "in" is by all odds to be preferred. Here and there the addition of commas would assist the reader, notably in this sprawling sentence: "Christians whether we are considering before 70 Pauline Christianity or after 70 other forms never had the feeling that . . ." (p. 547).

With reference to the quality of the printing, it is difficult to restrain one's language. The footnotes have suffered most. In the first place, the umlaut in German titles is simply omitted. The French diacritical marks fare somewhat better, although they are far from being perfectly represented. Even in the spelling of proper names which have no diacritical marks, one finds mistakes. It goes without saying that the scattered Greek words in the text and footnotes have come off the worst of all; fewer than half of them are correctly printed. Besides all these blemishes, one finds an assortment of various other kinds of misprints; in particular the titles of *Festschriften* have proved too much for the English proofreader (pp. 3, 119, etc.). It may be mentioned that apparently the Macmillan Company utilized the printing plates which were prepared by the University Press at Aberdeen for the British edition of this translation, which was published in 1953 in London by George Allen & Unwin, Ltd. In contrast with the accurate workmanship of the original French volume, neither of these identical editions in English is a credit to its publishing house.

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**The Christian Approach to Culture.** By ÉMILE CAILLIET. New York: The Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, 1953. 288 pp. \$3.75.

(*Ed. Note:* This book has been reviewed previously in *RELIGION IN LIFE*. However, such a penetrating discussion of it appeared in *The Christian Graduate*, London, of March, 1954, that we have secured permission to reprint extracts from it here.)

A great book is measured not by length but by breadth; not by the amount of thought it embodies, but by the amount it begets. Great books mark the reader for life. They start him thinking and leave him thinking; they force him to review the whole field of relevant knowledge in the light of new-found clues to its meaning.

Dr. Cailliet, Stuart Professor of Christian Philosophy at Princeton Seminary, has attempted to write a book of this calibre. Later generations may well decide that he has succeeded. His subject is the Church's commerce with the world's culture, which term he uses comprehensively to denote all the characteristic activities of the human mind—ethical, political, esthetic, scientific, philosophical, religious. The book is put out as a tract for the time, as its subtitle ("The schism between faith and our secular culture—its cause, effect and remedy") makes plain.

In order to understand the present situation as a first step towards meeting it, the author devotes most of his space to a survey and interpretation of culture from the earliest times to the present. This gives the book a vast range: the mind of primitive man, the history of Western philosophy, literary and scientific activity in post-Renaissance Europe and America, and the Communist "religion" of modern Russia, are each passed in review. In all these fields, Dr. Cailliet reveals that complete mastery which comes of knowing a subject well enough to see what can be left out when expounding it. He goes straight to the heart of every topic he touches, and tells the reader more about it in five pages than some books do in five hundred. His book is born of a big mind, and reveals a great humanist and a great Christian.

The first part of the treatise is an attempt to formulate "the Christian point of view on Culture," and thus to guide the Christian philosopher in his approach to it. He must not sell his soul to it. Biblical truth stands above all cultural forms; none are essential to it, and none can save those who reject it. Therefore, "the Christian challenge" to culture constitutes the prolegomenon to any Christian approach to culture" (p. 15). But neither may the Christian philosopher turn his back on it, and refuse to approach it at all. To turn one's back on the world and its culture is not Christian, but is a hangover from the Manichean heresy: a denial of the goodness of the created order.

The Christian philosopher "is emphatically a committed man who knows in whom he has believed" (p. 34). He needs a vital piety; he must share "the unanimity of first love" which marks the New Testament writers, else he will not understand them. His task is, precisely, "to refer all knowledge to a knowledge of the personal God of Scripture" (p. 45). His guiding principles derive from "the perennial witness of the Israel of God, which is the Body of Christ," as expressed in Scripture, Creeds, councils, and confessions of faith. He must steer clear of two erroneous extremes: *secularism*, the identification of Christianity with its manifestation in one particular culture (an error which produces "cultural arrogance" and ruins much missionary work); and *theologism*, the view that there is no truth or knowledge at all apart from the biblical revelation—the view of Barth, whom Dr. Cailliet takes to task for it.

Part II deals with "The Religious Relationship of Ancient Man with Reality."



Dr. Cailliet knows that culture must be studied genetically, if it is to become intelligible, and therefore begins his historical survey at the beginning, with primitive man. He is himself an expert here; he has been decorated by the French Government for his researches in anthropology in Madagascar, and is an authority on the primitive mind. His conclusions, based as they are on specialist knowledge, are striking. "There is on every side evidence of a primitive revelation . . . a direct presence of God in the soul of man" (p. 83). Prehistoric man had "from time immemorial . . . an intellect comparable to ours" (p. 87), and his "primitiveness" was entirely due to technological limitation. In religion, the evidence points to *degeneration* rather than *evolution*. Passing to the earliest known culture of the Near East and Greece, Dr. Cailliet finds a remarkable unity of outlook between the Sumerians of the fourth millennium B.C., Greek thinkers down to the fifth century, and the Hebrew prophets: a common concern for righteousness, "doing the truth," as the only good life, and a common conception of a Divine providence which guides and rewards the just. Here, again, is evidence of a diffused general revelation, alongside special revelation within Israel. But now (and here we move into Part III) came "the Ontological Deviation."

In Greece, the direction of enquiry abruptly changed. The aim of Socrates, who, Dr. Cailliet maintains, represented the old tradition in an unusually pure form, had been to obey his *daemon* within and thus to achieve "clarification of reality in the light of his faith" (p. 131). He sought knowledge through doing. Plato and his successors, however, were concerned to discover *intelligibility* in things, of the kind possessed by a mathematical system. They sought knowledge through thinking. Their pursuit of this programme constituted the ontological deviation. Speculation is "ontological" whenever intelligibility is made the touchstone of reality and truth. This speculative method always turns out to be fatal, for reality does not prove amenable to such treatment; and the mind, hunting for what it thinks ought to be there, fails to grasp what is actually before it.

Ontology is necessarily unrealistic, for its constructions come from the mind rather than the facts. It is obscurantist and hostile in its attitude toward experimental science, for scientific advance can only upset its cosmological apperception. It is ontology, not Christianity, that is embarrassed by scientific advance. Moreover, the impersonal brain-children of ontological speculators effectively drive the idea of a personal God out of their minds, turn the Creator into an abstraction, and virtually expel him from his world. Western thought, through Descartes and Kant, worked out the inner logic of Greek ontology, and issued in a culture that is empty, Godless and hopeless. Part IV of the book traces its progress up this blind alley to modern times.

Through Plato and Aristotle, the Greeks lost "their genuine sense of religious relationship with reality" (p. 141). God was depersonalized, and general revelation was generally ignored. Augustine and Thomas, the architects of Christian philosophy, traveled on the Greek band wagon, and were in consequence forced to identify the living God with the unmoved Mover of ontological speculation, a God as dead as a Euclidean triangle, "an Absolute Self-contained Principle, the very thought of Whom—or Which—is sufficient to dry up the springs of prayer in the human soul" (p. 247f.). Thus, traditional Christian philosophy never fitted the facts. Its concepts were always inappropriate to the reality they were intended to express. No wonder, therefore, that it is useless (and with all due respect to Neo-Thomism, Dr. Cailliet has no doubt that it *is* useless) for bridging the gulf between Christian faith and a culture out of touch with it.

And the very text to which Thomists appeal as justifying their metaphysics, Exod. 3:14, actually points away from ontology to the proper path for Christian thought. For there the great I AM proclaims, not *that* He is but *who* He is, not his mere existence but his personality, "that he is not only the One Who IS, but the One Who says 'I'" (p. 248). So that the right analogy for the Christian philosopher to develop when he seeks to order his thoughts about his transcendent Creator is the analogy, not of *Being*, as Aquinas thought, but of *Personality*. In Part V, Dr. Cailliet briefly indicates how this analogy should be developed if it is to embody the biblical account of the personality of Jehovah, fully aware of his world and dynamically related to it.

The last chapter unfolds a programme and a vision. Due to ontological malaise, Dr. Cailliet holds, Christian theology has never yet grown up, but remains weak and stunted. Its true method, as a science, is *a posteriori*. The function of a science is to discern intelligibility in reality. Theology, therefore, must *wait* for the human sciences to discover what the facts are before she can begin her task of interpreting them in the light of God. She cannot produce the answers till she knows the questions. And the sciences—social, political, economical, historical, psychological—"are as yet in various formative stages" (p. 266). Therefore "time is hardly ripe for the constitution of theology as a full-fledged scientific discipline" (p. 267). "It is not that theology is obsolete, then, but that it still is, and for an unpredictable length of time, in the embryonic stage" (p. 268). It is "a vigorous discipline in the making, destined to become the keystone in the edifice of human knowledge—under God the Creator" (p. 269). So the book ends.

Has Dr. Cailliet rightly appraised the situation? It is too soon to say. But this much seems clear. (1) Christian theologians—especially Evangelicals<sup>1</sup>—must stop giving the world up for lost in the way that, as Dr. Cailliet observes, Barth does. We may not content ourselves with sitting on the sands quacking mournfully over the spectacle of a world adrift. Our business is to rescue it, not to rehearse the hymns for its funeral. (2) Christians—especially Evangelicals—must recognize their responsibility for cultural leadership. We have shirked it too long. Only Christians can lead without leading astray. (3) Christians—especially Evangelicals—must acknowledge the justice of Dr. Cailliet's critique of ontological thought, and review their own in the light of it. Ontology is never so influential and damaging as when it goes unnoticed; and our Evangelical minds are full of it. Our attitude to science, to the Bible, to Karl Barth, proclaims it aloud. One reason why we are often dubbed obscurantist is because we often are.

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**The Galilean Way.** By JEREMY INGALLS. New York: Longmans, Green & Co., 1953. 266 pp. \$4.00.

This novel and cosmopolitan approach to the essential and enduring meanings of Christ for mankind is subtitled "A Book for Modern Skeptics." The author is a gifted poet and versatile scholar, now associate professor in Asiatic history and literature, and in English literature, at Rockford College in Illinois. She addresses her argument especially to those intelligent, cultured, religiously wiseful readers who

<sup>1</sup> The *Christian Graduate* is an organ of the Inter-Varsity Fellowship of Evangelical Unions.

are aware of the immensely broadened world still in process of discovery in both the natural and the social sciences, and who stumble at the apparent provincialism of Christianity in its various churchly versions. "The claim of a Christ is a claim to sufficient rescue for the whole world, offered to the whole world. . . . We can neither accept nor reject it, realistically, until we have examined as much of history as we can" (p. 14).

In thus speaking to the humanistic or secularized mind, however, she does not whittle down the New Testament message. She is not ashamed to assert the reality of original sin, of fallen man's need for salvation, of the Resurrection, and of eternal life beyond time. But wherever she deals with the Bible or older theological terminology, she also translates them into arresting modern language. It is not surprising that the jacket of the book bears commendations from Reinhold Niebuhr and from W. Russell Bowie.

From the dawn of history, she tells us, religion at all stages has consisted in man's finding himself in relation to a Way—the total process of what goes on in the universe, and the human way within this cosmic Way. Four stages of development may be distinguished in man's socio-politico-religious ways of life and corresponding views of the cosmos: the Clan view, the Heroic view, the Metropolitan view, and the Open-World view. In our own society competing metropolitanisms collide, along with many survivals from the earlier stages. Miss Ingalls exemplifies these phases from various centuries and cultures, and finds usefulness and truth enshrined in each of them along with their distortions.

Fourth is the Open-World view, which is first clearly proclaimed and revealed by Jesus Christ in that crossroads of Eastern and Western culture, Galilee. The Hebrew prophets were not his only significant predecessors. Evidence is adduced that Jesus and his hearers were far more cosmopolitan, exposed to currents from all directions, than has sometimes been supposed; that Galilee was an appropriate locale for the beginning of mankind's "Common Era." The Galilean teaching—as distinguished from the many "Christianities" in which it is fused or confused with surviving clan, heroic, or metropolitan elements—stressed "the common factor of value and dignity in human beings," "a common world family of equally responsible adults, responsible for the guidance of all children toward respect for all neighbors" (p. 83). "Love the Source of the Way and, as a necessary consequence, love your neighbor as yourself" (p. 85); inclusive, selfless love including that of enemies. These precepts had been foreshadowed in all religions—but always with significant limitations.

Some now accept and try to follow such teaching, however, without finding it necessary to accept the New Testament *gospel*. Miss Ingalls, however, maintains that, given the vast spectacle of human failure and our tragic history—in the face, for instance, of an encroaching totalitarianism of the Nazi or the Communist type—whatever teaching omits the Christ as the guarantor of human value can no longer be held adequate. The sense of the value of all humans as children of God cannot be kept *unless* we are deeply convinced that Jesus was and is the resurrected Christ of God. He alone can sufficiently demonstrate its cosmic truth.

In the second half of her book the author writes of various episodes in Jesus' life, taking due account of the need to differentiate between probable historic fact and legend after the fact, but not thereby detracting from his divinity. Her view regarding the Synoptic and Johannine problems is that Mark and John are both built upon a direct tradition from an apostle, while Matthew and Luke are comparatively sec-

ondary compilations. Her interpretations of Jesus' life and teachings are always arresting; some carry more conviction than others, but all show a keen and reverent imagination.

She treats also of sin and grace, the Sacraments, and the Lord's Prayer, showing their modern relevance. While she states truly, near the beginning of the book, that "Galilean Christians" (those who live and strive in the light of Christ's demand for selfless inclusive love) exist in all churches and outside the churches, it becomes unobtrusively clear toward the end that she herself is nurtured by the Anglican tradition. In her setting forth of the Galilean ethic she includes an interesting and unusual stress on its attitude toward human *talents*, which has particular relevance for "intellectuals." All talents matter, and are to be respected and encouraged; on the other hand, the one-talented or even apparently no-talented person is to be valued for his essential humanity just as reverently as the ten-talented.

To quote from her concluding chapter: "The history of human creativity discovers and rediscovers that human harmony in the Way is created by the free action that is the effort of selfless love. But the action of the Christ, up to and including his resurrection, is the only evidence we have that this discovery is a valid one . . . that this effort at whole love always has been and always will be sufficient. . . . At a distance this commitment appears the most burdensome of all possible decisions; approached and entered upon, it becomes the easiest." (pp. 252f.)

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**The Transformation of the Scientific World View.** By KARL HEIM. New York: Harper & Brothers, 1954. 262 pp. \$3.50.

This is another volume in Professor Heim's series on Christian faith and contemporary thought.

In the immediately preceding volume the author dealt with the bearings of modern mathematical theories on Christian thought, and in this one he moves on to physics and biology. The thesis is the same: beyond the space-time world with which science deals there is another sphere (if we dare use a spatial term) where the will of God operates, which underlies our phenomenal world of causal sequences. By the commitment of faith man is called into this other dimension of experience and sees his world from a different perspective, thereby winning a freedom from the determination of his life by physical and biological factors.

In a review of the history of recent thought—a review characterized by exceptional lucidity and by a remarkable grasp of the newer theories in physics and biology—Heim points out how the classical world view has been brought under heavy fire. The attempts of earlier physics to posit an absolute objective matter have been defeated by the reduction of inert matter to energy and light in the new physics; but this is not all. Light has now been replaced by the very subtle notion that even light is simply a function of "complementarity." As de Broglie put it, "As soon as the localized effect of the photon makes its appearance, the potential presence of the photon in the wave vanishes, and the wave itself is extinguished" (p. 48). The very condition of observation (the presence of light in the form of photons) produces a displacement of the microscopic particles so that when we see them they have already been displaced, so that our knowledge is no longer reliable.

As though this were not disturbing enough, the special relativity theory has declared that our observation is relative to the position of the observer so that there

is no fixed world center and we can no longer speak, as Newton was able to do, of an absolute space or of absolute positions of objects in relation to which we can calculate the positions or the motions of other objects. But since, as von Neumann pointed out, "we can define equal time intervals as those in which a point subject to no interference covers equal distances," the measurement of time is also involved in relativity. Absolute space and absolute time having vanished, the basis of the older mechanistic world view is destroyed. In its place we now have a series of space and time reference systems which can be mathematically related to each other, but all of which are relative.

Heim takes up next the problem of causality and shows how the "uncertainty principle" (the impossibility of determining the jumps of individual electrons, even though the total mass may seem to have a determinate behavior) has undermined the old mechanistic idea of determinism. Thus physics is forced to depend on statistical probability, though whether this compels us to abandon the notion of a rigid causal law is still a matter of dispute. In any case "all our explanations always come back to some ultimate inexplicable fundamental law."

Turning from physics to the realm of psycho-physical happenings, the author takes up the problem of miraculous healings and clairvoyance. Here numerous instances are cited which do not yield to explanation on the level of natural causal factors and which are the field of parapsychology.

In the light of all these developments man is cast into a situation where he is confronted by two possibilities: he can either accept the complete relativity of the natural world and be plunged into despair (the *Angst* of Heidegger) by virtue of having to act without any firm basis of decision; or he can reach out in faith to an absolute Will beyond all the space and time reference systems. At this point Heim draws together what he has said throughout the analysis in this volume, and what he had sought to demonstrate in the earlier volume on *Christian Faith and Natural Science*, regarding the centrality of the observer in all the calculations, the centrality of the "I," the presence of an "I" in every event, even in the inanimate things in our world. Lest this be construed as an illegitimate personalizing of the subhuman, he shows from experimental biology the striking parallelism between what we regard as psychic activities and the reactions of these lower forms, and even carries it back into the behavior of viruses and crystals.

Here he finds a "wholeness-tendency" (curiously enough he does not mention the writing of Jan Smuts on "holism") which produces results akin to the regenerative processes in living things. He calls attention to the astonishing capacity of lower forms by instinct to achieve directly what man would have to find out as a result of prolonged anatomical research (e.g., the ability of certain wasps to strike spiders at the precise nervous centers which will paralyze without killing them, thus furnishing a fresh food supply for the larvae). In all this argument he stresses continuity as much as the naturalistic thinker would do, but his conclusion is vastly different.

We are driven, he feels, to the Christian faith in God as the only bearable answer to the anxiety and despair which would otherwise engulf us in view of the limited human insight and the relativism of the world in which our lot is cast.

This type of argument is, of course, familiar in theology: to create a condition of complete agnosticism, then to show how this is unbearable for life, and finally to offer God as the answer of faith to the defeat of reason. Nevertheless, the volume has a very succinct account for the layman of the steps by which modern science has



been forced to change from the mechanistic thinking of an earlier age; and it serves to open the possibility for faith in the light of science.

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**In This Name: The Doctrine of the Trinity in Contemporary Theology.**

By CLAUDE WELCH. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1952. xiii-313 pp. \$3.50.

Seldom does one pick up a book in which historical study and theological insight and reconstruction are so fruitfully related as in this volume. Professor Welch, who teaches contemporary theology at the Yale Divinity School, has from a methodological point of view alone shown how important historical study can be for the sake of theological thinking.

But the book is more than this. It is a creative piece of theological work on the doctrine of the Trinity. Those who feel that the concept of the Trinity is unfortunate or that it once served a purpose now no longer necessary, will find in this book a most compelling argument for why it cannot but be central in Christian theological thinking. Moreover, they will encounter a most convincing restatement of various facets of the trinitarian problem.

Professor Welch is quite aware that the new interest in the concept of the Trinity is directly related to the theological reawakening of the past two or three decades. In fact, the author begins his book with a survey of attitudes toward the notion of the Trinity in nineteenth-century thought. Predominantly there is no interest in the concept and it is reduced to a position of little importance. Where it is employed, as in Hegelian thought, it hardly stands for the Christian message. In conservative thought, it is affirmed but not with understanding.

The author then shows how the prevailing nineteenth-century patterns have continued to play a role in certain contemporary attitudes. The liberal rejection is found in Baillie, McGiffert, Macintosh, Tennant, etc. Forms of monarchianism are found in a host of thinkers, including Rashdall, Edwards, Thomas, etc., while even Brunner considers it merely a defensive doctrine. On the philosophical side, such thinkers as Lionel Thornton and Dorothy Sayers are considered. Conservative and Roman Catholic writers are also considered.

In some of the preaching writers, Professor Welch finds many helpful suggestions and hard thought. But he believes that the center of the problem has not yet been reached, since, at best, most of the writers under discussion view the concept of the Trinity as essentially peripheral to the nature of God. Of greater significance is a group of writers who do see the Trinity in relation to God's revelation. To this group belong men as diverse as Pittenger, Whale, and Lowry, as well as thinkers such as Webb and Hodgson, the latter pair being known for the concept of social analogy. But, at best, these men still think of the concept of the Trinity in synthetic terms. It is a deduction from revelation and the nature of life, and directed in most instances to squaring the Christian experience with the inherited notion of monotheism.

For the author, this is wrong. We must start with the God who is triune. Here Karl Barth is considered of decisive importance, for it was Barth who saw that one must begin with the God who reveals himself and that this revelation itself is the disclosure of the triune God. Revelation discloses something of the inner rela-



tions of God himself as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. The Trinity therefore must be central and not a matter of theological deduction or synthesis.

The section on Barth is a masterpiece of historical exposition, exceeded only in quality by the author's own constructive statements in the last section of the book. In the latter, the classical formulations come to life in a fresh way even when their inadequacies for our time, if not only for theirs, are forcefully delineated. The author's own formulation would center the unity of God analogically in the concept of personality, and the traditional concept of persons in terms of "modes of being." In themselves, these phrases may mean little. But when understood in the context of the book, they take on deep meaning, since they faithfully portray the God who in himself is triune life and who in revelation has disclosed himself as such.

Few books fundamentally change our thinking. I confess that this volume moved me from the notion that the Trinity is fundamentally a defensive doctrine safeguarding something of the life of God and the Christian revelation, to the conviction that one must see the triune God as the *arche* from which all Christian thinking proceeds. This is inevitable if the Trinity deals with God himself even though we know him only through revelation. Unfortunately, the rich nuances of the author's exposition of this central point and many others not here mentioned cannot be captured in a review.

JOHN DILLENBERGER

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**New Testament Pattern: an exegetical enquiry into the "catholic" and "protestant" dualism.** By JEAN-LOUIS LEUBA. Trans. by Harold Knight. London: Lutterworth Press, 1953. 163 pp. 17/6.

At the Amsterdam Assembly, two diverse conceptions of the Church were found to be at the root of the "deepest difference" that runs through all the churches: the "catholic" conception of the Church as an "institution" continuing through apostolic succession, and the "protestant" conception of it as the "ever-renewed initiative" (or, as Barth called it, the "event") whereby God gathers his people in each generation by the unpredictable action of his Word and Spirit. The pastor of the French Reformed Church in Basel, Jean-Louis Leuba, has made an important contribution to the study of these two ideas, by showing that they are both grounded in clearly distinguishable strands of New Testament teaching, not easily united in any logical scheme, yet never leading in New Testament times to any such tragic schism as developed later. If what men later put asunder, God joined together in the Early Church, there are surely good grounds for hoping that the long divorce between these two ideas may eventually end in some sort of reconciliation.

The book is divided into three parts, in which (with admirable French clarity) the dualism between "institution" and "event" is traced through three closely related topics: the Christ, the Apostles, and the Church. (The French title of the book, when it was published in 1950, was *L'Institution et L'Evénement*.)

1. New Testament teaching concerning the Christ "seems to revolve around two essential titles: on the one hand, Jesus is the descendant and successor of David, on the other hand, He is a heavenly transcendent man intervening suddenly in the life of Israel . . . and accomplishing His eschatological work in the power of God and of the Spirit of God" (p. 12). Yet in the original New Testament Credo, *Kyrios Christos*, the Jewish Messiahship and transcendent Lordship of Jesus are

indissolubly united. "To allow the Lordship to become absorbed in the Messiahship would be the effect of a Judaizing heresy. . . . To allow the Messiahship to become absorbed in the Lordship would be the effect of a Marcionite heresy" (p. 48). Tension between these two trends can be observed in the New Testament; yet unity triumphs.

2. As Christ is both "institutional" and "spiritual," so are the Apostles. The Twelve are clearly considered to have a function continuous with that of the covenant people, Israel. Their apostolate to continue the mission of Israel under a New Covenant was "created by Jesus during His ministry and confirmed by Him after His resurrection" (p. 51). The Apostle Paul, on the other hand, has a purely spiritual apostolate, a new and unprecedented mission conferred upon him by the Risen Lord. Peter the leader of the Twelve, and Paul the leader of the Gentile Mission were destined to be opposed to one another in later centuries by partisan Catholics and Protestants. The attempt to set these apostles on an equal footing was formally denounced as heresy in 1647, by a Vatican decree (p. 91). Yet in their lifetime Peter and Paul recognized one another's apostolates in the most specific terms, and divided the total Christian mission peaceably and equally between the two of them.

3. The Jerusalem Church headed by Peter and the Twelve was not only institutionally continuous with Israel, but it tended to propagate itself from one "sacrosanct centre," and to accept the institutional authority of that centre, somewhat as the Roman Church later did. The Gentile Church founded by Paul, on the other hand, had a "charismatic" ministry, and tended toward a more "congregational" structure (p. 103). In the modern ear, the papist and congregational principles are completely at loggerheads. Yet at the Council of Jerusalem, the Jerusalem Church took the most delicate care to preserve fellowship with the Gentile Church, while recognizing its distinctive character; and the Apostle Paul literally sacrificed his freedom and his life to bring an offering from the Gentile Church to Jerusalem, symbolizing and cementing the unity of these diverse types of church.

Can it be that Peter and Paul, "catholic" and "protestant" Christianity, may some day be reconciled? Not if Catholics and Protestants stick to their partisan perspectives. Both Barth and Brunner must be described as intransigent partisans of the Pauline "spiritual" church. But two books have now come from Protestant Basel—Cullman's *Peter* and this one by Leuba—boldly admitting Peter to full copartnership with Paul. After this, the next move is up to Rome. Can Rome move, or is it still tied to that miserable partisan decree of 1647?

This is a small book, but the issues it raises are of the first magnitude. The Lutterworth Press is to be thanked for bringing it to the attention of the English-speaking world.

WALTER MARSHALL HORTON

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**The Apostolic Succession in the First Two Centuries of the Church.** By ARNOLD EHREHARDT. London: Lutterworth Press, 1953. 168 pp. 16 s.

Fiction or fact, the notion of apostolic succession is frequently discussed in ecumenical gatherings, and for some time there has been a need for a modern historical treatment of it. This need has not been satisfied by *The Apostolic Ministry*, edited by Bishop Kirk of Oxford in 1946. In that book almost the entire historical case was made to rest on the enigmatic and indeed almost imaginary figure of the

*shaliach*, the Jewish equivalent of the Christian apostle. Dr. Ehrhardt rightly buries this figure in the first chapter of his book.

The problem still remains, however, of the relation between the first-century apostle and the second-century bishop. Here Ehrhardt's solution is original, brilliant, and convincing. The idea of apostolic succession was the creation of the Jewish-Christian church of Jerusalem, and was based on the succession lists of the Jewish high priests. All the earliest references to apostolic succession come from Jewish-Christian sources: 1 Clement (whose Jewish Christianity has been upheld by W. C. van Unnik in an article Ehrhardt does not mention), the pseudo-Clementine literature, and Hegesippus. There were other types of succession, especially that of prophets in Asia Minor, but this type was brought to an end because of Montanist extravagances. Irenaeus was the teacher who developed the notion most fully; he transmitted it to his "pupils" Tertullian and Hippolytus.

All this is developed in a series of chapters which work out the details in a powerful and, one may say, masterly way. We can think of a few points at which the argument might go just a little farther. For example, Ehrhardt notes that "Ignatius, despite his fervent zeal for non-episcopacy" (p. 76) is silent concerning apostolic succession. Indeed, it would seem that at one point the apostolic succession is really excluded. In the first chapter of his letter to the Philadelphians, Ignatius says, "I know that your bishop obtained the ministry (*diakonia*) . . . neither from himself nor through men nor for vain-glory, but in the love of God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ." This passage is a paraphrase of Galatians 1:1, where Paul is insisting on his absolute independence from the church of Jerusalem and its succession. Does not Ignatius too, since he absolutely rejects Jewish Christianity (Philad. 6), reject apostolic succession?

Another example is the case of Polycrates of Ephesus, to which Ehrhardt alludes (pp. 66 and 148). Seven of his relatives had been bishops before him—and it is striking, as Archbishop Carrington has observed, that he has just listed seven "luminaries" of Asia Minor, one of whom, John, had been a priest and had worn the *petalon* or high-priest's breastplate. Here is another example of a kind of Jewish Christianity in which priestly, episcopal, and apostolic succession are combined, and within a family as in Judaism! These points seem to confirm Ehrhardt's case.

Any future discussion of apostolic succession will have to be undertaken with this thesis in mind, and the book can be recommended without qualification to anyone interested in the history of the early church and its ministry.

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**The Man in Leather Breeches: The Life and Times of George Fox.** By  
VERNON NOBLE. New York: Philosophical Library, 1953. 288 pp. \$6.00.

The story of George Fox surpasses fiction. He was a mystic who had moments of ecstasy when, like St. Paul, he was lifted into the seventh heaven and heard revelations of the divine goodness which could not be put into words. Yet he was a practical, skillful organizer who gave form and substance to an individualistic sect enabling it to survive when other mystical bodies of the period disappeared. His wisdom and courageous example strengthened the Society of Friends so that it out-

lived the most cruel and lengthy persecution suffered by any people, unless the Jesuits, in that century.

Fox dominated one of the great upsurges of new life which since the first century has demonstrated the vitality of Christianity. His movement borrowed much of its ethics from the Puritans, whom it out-Puritaned. It absorbed thousands of Seekers. Its mystical concept of the union of the soul with Christ, and the possibility of divine guidance in all the affairs of life, had a long ancestry. Rufus M. Jones has traced this "thread of gold" back through the Lollards, the Brethren of Christ, Frances de Sales, Meister Eckhart, the mystics among the Church Fathers to St. Paul and the Johannine writings. To those who listened to George Fox, his message of a direct pathway to God seemed excitingly new. Fox believed he was reviving primitive Christianity.

Vernon Noble, a B.B.C. commentator and author, tells the story of *The Man in Leather Breeches* in a readable, fresh, and lively style. He uses the materials placed at his disposal at Friends House in London with a skilled hand. His interpretation of Fox and the movement he fathered is sympathetic; as a non-Friend his viewpoint is more objective than that of most Quaker historians. Much about Fox remains an enigma to the author. He understands the absolute honesty of Fox—judges let him out of prison without bail on his promise to return on a given date—and the fearlessness and prophetic qualities in Fox's character; but finds it hard to explain the Quaker leader's fanaticism, his quibbling over trifling matters of dress and speech, and his vindictive joy on learning of the downfall of his enemies. That the supersensitive mystic had visions, Noble understands, but cannot credit his miracles of healing. Fox wrote a "Book of Miracles," which was never published by the Society, and its contents have been only partially recovered in modern times by Henry J. Cadbury.

The Quakers were a puzzle to the people of the seventeenth century, and Vernon Noble correctly writes that they are still a mystery to many today. Their continuous efforts to alleviate suffering and to achieve world peace are appreciated by all Christians. The Quaker use of silent worship is duplicated in some measure by other Christian bodies; their method of arriving at decisions without voting is finding an appeal even in business circles. But other religious bodies, especially the clergy, find it difficult to approve the Quaker rejection of visible sacraments, a clearly defined creed, and a paid ministry. Indeed, in ecumenical circles, the Quakers are accepted only because the fruits of their spiritual communion are so obviously Christian that their peculiarities must be overlooked.

The author of this excellent study of the prophet of Quakerism gives many clear pictures of the turbulent times in which Fox lived. He gives credit to Cromwell, Charles II, and James II for their assurance that the Quakers were neither plotters against the government nor blasphemous seducers of the populace, the position held by bishop and presbyters. Interviews between Fox and other leading Quakers and the heads of the government are fully given. The power of Parliament, dominated by religious passions, over the Protector and Kings is shown by the imprisonment and sufferings of thousands of Quakers, and the death of hundreds in the loathsome gaols of England. The rulers were powerless to stop these persecutions.

Noble paints brief but effective pictures of the associates of Fox. With real sensitivity he shows the rise and fall of James Nayler, who for a time in the eyes of many towered above Fox himself. Later Nayler by his aberrations—due to exhaustion and an overwrought nervous condition—brought great scandal upon

Friends. His conduct gave the enemies of the Society a strong weapon to attack the fundamental Quaker doctrine of individual guidance by the Indwelling Christ. It was the mistake of Nayler, however, which brought out Fox's genius as an organizer, and caused him to develop a system of business meetings where collective judgment checked individual idiosyncrasies.

Margaret Fell stands out as a mother in Israel, a remarkable woman whose home became the northern headquarters of Quakerism, and whose influence with magistrates and court circles softened the sufferings of many Friends. Noble is rightly puzzled by the marriage of Fox, at forty-five, to the widowed Margaret Fell, ten years his senior. He finds in their peculiar courtship and marriage the union of two good friends and fellow apostles. The tender regard of the well-educated and courtly William Penn for the apprenticed shoemaker is a tribute to Fox's character. Fox's wisdom in leaving the comprehensive theological defense of the new movement to the well-trained Robert Barclay indicates his willingness to delegate tasks beyond his own talents. Many of the "Valiant Sixty," the men and women who first spread belief in the Inward Light, are briefly but clearly portrayed.

Fox lived to see the ambitions of his youth realized; at his death the movement to which he gave impetus was the largest body of nonconformists in Great Britain, with many thousands scattered throughout the American colonies. His disciples had gone into almost every nation on the continent, to the Pope and to the Sultan in Constantinople. Religious freedom was won through the perseverance and sufferings of Fox and his fellows; the right to trial by an unhampered jury was secured through the fortitude of William Penn.

Vernon Noble's sympathetic approach to his subject is well illustrated by his use of Trevelyan's comment, "The Puritan pot had boiled over, with much heat and fury, when it had cooled and been poured away, this precious sediment [the Quakers] was left at the bottom."

BLISS FORBUSH

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### **Lyman Abbott, Christian Evolutionist: A Study in Religious Liberalism.**

By IRA V. BROWN. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1953. xiv-303 pp. \$5.00.

For forty-six years, from 1876 until his death in 1922, Lyman Abbott was editor of the weekly magazine known first as the *Christian Union*, and from July, 1893, as the *Outlook*. For eleven of these years, 1888 to 1899, he was also the successor of Henry Ward Beecher as pastor of Plymouth Church, Brooklyn. Yet in these years he wrote and published thirty-five books, and edited twenty-two more. He was in wide demand as a public lecturer and, after resigning the Plymouth pastorate, as a preacher before college audiences. In the introduction to one of his books which was published soon after his death, Henry Sloane Coffin wrote: "Judged by the number of persons whom he reached through his voice and pen, and by the extent to which he shaped their thinking, Lyman Abbott was unquestionably the foremost doctor of the church in America in his time, and one of the half-dozen most potent teachers of Christianity in our national history."

Yet this was not because of any extreme views or methods. He was a quiet, persuasive, confident liberal. He said of himself, in the preface to his *Reminiscences*, "My sympathies have been for the most part neither with the radicals nor with the reactionaries, but with the progressives in every reform. I have been an evolu-



tionist, but not a Darwinian; a Liberal, but not an Agnostic; an Anti-slavery man, but not an Abolitionist; a temperance man, but not a Prohibitionist; an Industrial Democrat, but not a Socialist."

This volume of *Reminiscences* is one of the most delightful of American autobiographies. But it was published in 1915, and centers almost entirely upon men, events, and movements in the nineteenth century. The book by Dr. Brown gives for the first time a balanced and reasonably complete account of Lyman Abbott and his work, and it is a welcome addition to the literature of American history.

Abbott was slow to find his lifework. He was graduated from New York University in 1853, one of his classmates being T. DeWitt Talmage, whose subsequent popularity as a preacher was won more rapidly and by quite different methods. Abbott devoted six years to the legal profession, then decided to become a minister. He gave five years to a pastorate in Terre Haute, Indiana; then he resigned to become executive secretary of the American Union Commission, a nonsectarian organization devoted to education and reconstruction in the South. This work engaged him from 1865 to 1869, and he then settled at Cornwall-on-Hudson, to make his living by writing. It was not until seven years later, when he was approaching the age of forty-one, that he joined Henry Ward Beecher in the editorship of the *Christian Union*. From the first, Beecher placed the control of the periodical in Abbott's hands; and in 1881, Beecher retired and Abbott became editor-in-chief.

His father, Jacob Abbott, the well-known author of the *Rollo* books, wrote him: "You are evincing the very unusual power, of explaining and defending truth, without exaggerating and so exasperating error." Under his editorship, for more than thirty years, the *Outlook* prospered and grew in influence; a turn toward decline began when Theodore Roosevelt, at the close of his Presidency of the United States, became a "special contributing editor," and the magazine became increasingly drawn into the swirl of political conflict and suspicion. It remained a powerful factor in American life until Abbott's death, but thereafter its circulation declined till in 1932 it was sold to Alfred E. Smith, who stopped publication in 1935.

The most amazing aspect of Abbott's life was his notable success as pastor of Plymouth Church, following Henry Ward Beecher. Rossiter W. Raymond, the well-known mining engineer, who was a member of the church, when asked how the new minister was getting on, replied, "Admirably. Of course, in style he is nothing like Beecher. We have no bursts of eloquence; his subject never runs away with him. He gets on quietly, rides it at a perfectly controlled pace and along a delightful road to the place he wants to reach, and then stops, ties up the steed—and there you are!" Abbott began to use the Sunday evening service for lectures on the great religious problems of the time, with the result that the auditorium was crowded. These lectures were afterward rewritten and published in four significant volumes: *Christianity and Social Problems* (1896), *The Theology of an Evolutionist* (1897), *The Life and Letters of Paul the Apostle* (1898), and *The Life and Literature of the Ancient Hebrews* (1901). When he resigned the Plymouth pulpit, the *New York Tribune* said in an editorial: "As a preacher he has occupied a unique place and given a new vitality to the Christianity of many people who found difficulty in reconciling the religion of their traditions with the secular thought of their time . . . who wish to hold the old faith, but who are bound to face its problems rationally and frankly. To them a man like Lyman Abbott is a tower of strength, a conservative force, and at the same time an intellectual stimulus."



Abbott was an evolutionist and a liberal. It is easy, from our harder days, to criticize the optimism of his theology. He overemphasized the immanence of God to the relative neglect of his transcendence; and he may be accused of failing to portray sin in all its black terror. It is in his *Reminiscences*, incidentally, that Dr. Rosewell Hitchcock's saying concerning original sin is recorded: "Adam did not represent me, for I never voted for him."

But Lyman Abbott was a great Christian, and a remarkably effective teacher of men. "I have thrown out in my life these four anchors," he affirmed, "—my faith in goodness, my faith in the possibility of men's accomplishment of goodness, my faith in Jesus Christ as the ideal of goodness, and my faith in the divine helpfulness in the world to help me to goodness. . . . And I am sure that there is One higher than the highest, and greater than the greatest, and wiser than the wisest, and better than the best, who is working out this world destiny. And I—I do the little I can do, and leave the rest to God."

With respect both to evolutionary science and biblical scholarship, Abbott was, in the best sense of the term, a popularizer. He contributed to the awakening social conscience of the churches, and he was an early opponent of American isolationism. Dr. Brown's account of his life and work is admirable and deserves a wide reading.

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**Introduction to Religion.** By WINSTON L. KING. New York: Harper & Brothers, 1954. xvi-563 pp. \$6.00.

In the course of the routine enterprises of study, research, writing, and teaching which normally absorb the life of a professor of religion, one inevitably comes upon books written in almost every conceivable way and from as many different points of view. Since the ancient Greeks set the pattern, a great host of persons have written about the quaint and curious customs, ceremonials, and rites. With the rise of the modern philosophical and scientific point of view, it was only natural that scholars should begin to write in encyclopedic fashion about religion, but assuming the position of a spectator who describes the passing spectacle without becoming involved in it, or by attempting to make a critical analysis of religious ideas in order to determine the element of truth or error they contain.

The author of the present work takes note of the fact that these types of books exist in abundance and recognizes that each has its own value, but at the outset he states that he writes not as an outsider but as a Christian. He knows that he is not only watching the game, but that he is actually one of the players. So the reader is told frankly the point of view of the author. Moreover, this book is written by one who has seen clearly that there are no entirely objective persons who can give an unbiased report on what religion is, has been, and will be. He is voicing a feeling now rapidly becoming pervasive around the universities that every writer either explicable or implicitly makes his assumptions; that whether we are aware of it or not, all of us in reality are standing up and being counted.

It is immensely refreshing therefore to read this book about religion, which is excellent for many reasons. First of all, for the very evident love of the subject with which it deals. Not that the author writes with sentimental admiration of all the varied ideas and practices in the wide field of religion. But that he deals with every aspect of his study with sympathy and understanding, so far as he is able to achieve it. In other words, he sees that religion is universal and that, although

there is a great diversity, there is yet a basic sense in which all religions are one. This concept is the basis of his organization throughout and is one of the great merits of his work. So he finds expressions of the same deep human need or aspiration appearing under different external forms and ceremonials in many of the various religions. It is good for us to be able to see that, deep down in the heart, followers of the world's faiths may discover a community of experience. The book is also characterized by very sound scholarship. In a synoptic treatment which cuts across every religion of the world, both ancient and modern, one might say, this author moves with certainty. He has worked long and hard on this volume, and the result is a really good book.

The three parts are: I. What Is Religion? II. Religion as Social Pattern. III. Religion as Salvation. But those bare titles carry nothing of the rich, fascinating presentation of the materials.

The author's judicious analysis and clarity of thought are accompanied by a simple and lucid literary style which makes its reading a pleasure.

S. VERNON MCCASLAND

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**Communion With God in the New Testament.** By A. RAYMOND GEORGE. London: The Epworth Press, 1953. (Alec R. Allenson, Chicago.) xx-274 pp. 25s.

This Fernley-Hartley "Lecture" for 1953 deserves the jacket description, "a weighty yet attractively simple study." The author, a tutor in Wesley College, Headingsley, Leeds, approaches his subject with a scholarly background in both Greek exegesis and Christian theology. He builds upon the work of others, notably Seesemann, Heiler, Deissmann, Taylor, and Flew, yet he writes with independence and makes a fresh contribution. He consistently challenges K. E. Kirk's use of the term "vision" for the New Testament experience of God, and demonstrates that "communion" is the best generic term. The significance of "koinōnia" is studied in detail.

Mr. George's analysis distinguishes three types of piety: first, "mysticism" in the narrow sense of absorption into the divine, or "union," the absence of which indicates throughout the New Testament an essentially Jewish rather than Greek quality; second, an "I-Thou" relationship in which distinctness is maintained but communion is basic; third, a different faith-relationship where man is too separated from God for real communion. He finds New Testament piety to be entirely of the "I-Thou" second type, but that is itself subdivided according as the communion is more nearly "mystical" or more "prophetic," approaching the third type.

Aligning himself with the reaction against extreme form criticism, the author uses the Synoptic Gospels to study Jesus' own prayers and teaching on prayer. He concludes that Jesus' piety was in the "prophetic" division of the second type, but was distinctive within that class—on the one hand because with him petition and intercession possessed unique warmth and intimacy, and on the other hand because the element of sinful separation from God was purely vicarious.

The pre-Pauline piety of the primitive Church, seen in Acts, is found to be of the "prophetic" type, warmed by a common participation in the gift of the Spirit. With Paul, the death and resurrection of Christ so enrich Christian communion with God as to bring "a greater preponderance of joy over sorrow" than Jesus himself could have. Paul's frequent use of the phrase "in Christ," and the idea

of dying and rising with Christ, approach a "Christ-mysticism," but *being* "with Christ" is reserved for the future life, and even then the "I-Thou" relationship never yields to "union." The Johannine communion with God the Father is likewise through Christ, through whom alone we "see" and "know" God. The characteristic Johannine expression for the mutual indwelling of Christ and the believer is "abide in," but here, too, there is no "absorption" now or hereafter. The other New Testament books are briefly shown to offer little relevant to this study.

In every section of the work, Mr. George stresses the corporate element. The Christian has communion with God as a member of the Church, the body of Christ—a communion inaugurated through Baptism and sustained through the Eucharist.

MARION BENEDICT ROLLINS

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**A History of the Ecumenical Movement, 1517-1948.** Edited by RUTH ROUSE and STEPHEN CHARLES NEILL. Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1954. xxiv-846 pp. \$9.00.

Dr. Samuel McCrea Cavert, General Secretary of the United States Conference of the World Council of Churches, says about *A History of the Ecumenical Movement*, "for decades to come students will turn to the volume as the most authentic account of ecumenical development prior to Amsterdam." This is not merely a grouping of articles, but a survey of many years and how one idea impressed these years; it is one story. Ecumenical feeling was inherent in the Reformation Church, and in this symposium scholars of many countries and many churches record with great perception the fluctuating search for Christian unity as it was historically felt and as it was realized. The study begins with a glimpse of the pre-Lutheran Anabaptists and closes with the formation of the World Council of Churches at Amsterdam in 1948.

In the first chapter Professor John T. McNeill of Union Seminary, New York, writes about the early Reformers. Professor Martin Schmidt of Berlin deals with the varieties of ecumenical approach in seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Europe, while Professor Norman Sykes of Cambridge examines the same period in England. Nineteenth-century ecumenical movements in America are discussed by Professor Don Yoder of Franklin and Marshall College, and Father H. R. T. Brandreth of St. George's Church (Anglican) considers the same century in Europe. The ecumenical concern of the Eastern Orthodox Church is studied by Dean Georges Florovsky of St. Vladimir's Seminary, and an additional chapter on this church's present position comes from the eminent Orthodox scholar, Dr. Nicholas Zernov. Roman Catholic examination of the ecumenical movement is annotated by Canon Oliver S. Tomkins, former Secretary of the Faith and Order Commission, W.C.C.

The twentieth century marks the beginning of the ecumenical movement as we know it. Professor Kenneth S. Latourette of Yale begins this section with the Edinburgh Conference of 1910, which in a few years led to the formation of the International Missionary Council. Canon Tislington Tatlow of Canterbury Cathedral traces the history of the Faith and Order movement, and Dean Nils Karlstrom of the Church of Sweden writes a parallel chapter on the Life and Work movement. Bishop Neill discusses ecumenicity since 1910, and Dr. Rouse, his co-editor, completes the story of world-wide developments from that time.

The book closes with a chapter by Dr. W. A. Visser 't Hooft, General Secretary

of the World Council of Churches, on the formation of this Council. Although Amsterdam seems a victorious climax to the ecumenical movement, the history of church union is not finished. Dr. Visser 't Hooft concludes his chapter and the book: "(We) can only praise God for the foretaste of the unity of His people which He has given to it, and to continue hopefully to serve the Churches as they prepare to meet their Lord, who knows only one flock."

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**The Sacraments in Methodism.** By ROBERT W. GOODLOE. Nashville: The Methodist Publishing House, 1953. 160 pp. \$1.75.

Intended primarily for use by Methodist theological students and ministers, this compact volume discusses both the meaning and administration of the sacraments in the Methodist tradition. The interpretation is grounded in the Pauline affirmation, "By grace are ye saved through faith." Salvation is a co-operative process: God offers forgiveness and newness of life which man must trustfully and actively accept. The sacraments do not confer grace through the acts performed, but use outward symbols to bring God's grace to human consciousness and arouse faith.

The Lord's Supper is significant as a memorial, as a communion, as a proclamation that Jesus is Lord, and as "an anticipation of his 'coming again' and of our achieving his likeness." As Zwingli maintained, the bread and wine symbolize the broken body and shed blood of the crucified Lord, thus making real to the recipient the forgiving love of God in Christ. The author comments helpfully on conditions for admission to the Lord's Supper, preaching on it, methods of administering it, and its spiritual values.

Noting the historical connection between belief in original sin and baptismal regeneration, Goodloe rejects the notion that baptism washes away an inherent corruption. Rather it represents the spiritual purification wrought through divine grace freely appropriated by faith, personal commitment, and initiation into the Christian fellowship. Infant baptism is the solemn dedication of children to God; the parents' vows and the quality of life thus encouraged become channels of the grace of God in leading the child to become Christian. The central meaning of baptism is unaffected by the mode employed: immersion, sprinkling, and pouring may all bring to the repentant heart a consciousness of the cleansing, transforming power of the Holy Spirit.

The treatment suffers somewhat from a sketchiness which is perhaps inevitable in such a brief manual. The discussion of infant baptism states persuasively the case for infant dedication, but does not meet the objection that a sacrament should be limited to those for whom the outward act can really signify an inward experience. In view of the strength of neo-orthodoxy, is it accurate to say that because of the spread of the doctrine of justification by faith, belief in original sin is declining? One wonders also why, in discussing the significance of the Holy Communion, the author omits such vital elements as confession, forgiveness, and consecration.

Nevertheless, the book sheds important light on the Methodist view of the sacraments, and its evaluation of other traditions is fair-minded and objective. Its style is simple and direct. It should prove valuable to both ministers and laymen.

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## Book Notices

Richard M. Cameron of Boston University has compiled *The Rise of Methodism: A Source Book* (Philosophical Library, \$4.75). He points out that "the story of the early years of Methodism is one of the most stirring epics of Christianity since the Reformation," and "never has it been better told than by the men who were themselves making the story as they wrote"—the Wesleys, George Whitefield, and the rest. Selections from John Wesley's *Journal*, with commentary, are used as framework, usually in chronological arrangement, with other relevant material fitted in. "In general, the principle of selection has been the intrinsic importance, or at least the representative character, of the piece involved." The book is full of human interest beyond most "source books." Cf. Dr. Cameron's "The Little Flowers of John Wesley," in *RELIGION IN LIFE*, Spring, 1954.

Kenneth S. Latourette's *The Christian World Mission in Our Day* is a small readable book published by Harper (\$2.50). Harper has also given us *Jew and Greek: A Study in the Primitive Church* (\$2.50), by the late Dom Gregory Dix, brilliant British Anglican monk and author also of *The Shape of the Liturgy*. Also a symposium, *Work and Vocation* (\$2.75), edited with introduction by John Oliver Nelson, the other contributors being Paul S. Minear, R. S. Michaelson, R. L. Calhoun, and R. S. Bilheimer. This is one of the books published for discussion and study "before and after" Evanston, and the writers are summarizing the work of a larger group drawn from biblical scholars and leaders in church, labor, industry, and related fields. The larger and more central Evanston volume, *The Christian Hope and the Task of the Church* (Harper, \$5.00) came too late for review before the event; it includes six ecumenical surveys and the Report of the Assembly prepared by the Advisory Commission.

The Seabury Press (Greenwich, Conn.) chose as its Lenten book this year J. V. Langmead Casserley's *Graceful Reason*—a thoroughly graceful book, on "the delicate and touchy problem of natural theology" (\$2.75). While he deals with theological and philosophical questions in scholarly terms, he also has a gift for telling illustrations and appeal to the reasonably well-educated "man of the street." John Heuss, Rector of Trinity Church in Wall Street, says, "I find all that he writes useful grist for my humble mill."

Westminster Press has published two small but evocative books: *Preaching the Gospel of the Resurrection*, by D. T. Niles (lectures delivered by the Ceylonese leader in Adelaide, Australia), and *The Practice and Power of Prayer*, by John Sutherland Bonnell (sermons delivered at Fifth Avenue Presbyterian Church and on the "National Vespers" program of WABC); \$2.00 and \$1.50 respectively. D. T. Niles: "Death is challenged at every step by love; the love of God being set over against the hell within which men continue to shut themselves."

Another book on prayer is *Man, God, and Prayer*, by Hubert Northcott, published by S.P.C.K. in London (9s.6d.). Father Northcott's earlier book, *The Venture of Prayer*, was reviewed by Georgia Harkness in our issue of Winter 1951-52. The present shorter work was written for an introduction to Christian life and doctrine with special reference to prayer, designed for "men and women in ordinary conditions" which would also encourage the seeking of fuller knowledge; and for help on the mission fields.



*A Half Century of Union Theological Seminary, 1896-1945*, is "an informal history" by former President Henry Sloane Coffin (Scribner, \$2.50), which will be welcomed with joy by all who are interested in the Seminary. Morgan P. Noyes supplies a chapter on the contribution of Dr. Coffin himself, and President Henry P. Van Dusen has added an "afterword" on developments of the past nine years.

Lefferts A. Loetscher of Princeton has made a study of theological issues in the Presbyterian Church since 1869, published by the University of Pennsylvania Press under the title *The Broadening Church* (\$4.75). Now that this denomination has left behind the "inadequate and sterile formulations of the fundamentalist-modernist controversy," he calls for "more profound and constructive exploration."

Marc Boegner, President of the French Protestant Federation and ecumenical leader, has preached Lenten sermons over the French government radio network for over twenty years. One such sermon series consisted of meditations on the Lord's Prayer. These have been translated by Howard Schomer, minister of the Mission of Fellowship to European Churches, and published by the Abingdon Press under the title, *The Prayer of the Church Universal* (\$1.75). Abingdon has also published *Christian Teaching in the Churches*, by John Q. Schisler (\$2.50). This book "seeks to emphasize the essential place of Christian education as a major among the several categories in the total function of the Christian Church." It is not a book on methods but "a call to action."

The Rev. Richard M. L. Waugh of Belfast, Ireland, has written a book which "will prove a godsend" to many preachers who "find it impossible to keep up their Greek": *The Preacher and His Greek Testament*. (Epworth Press, London, 104 pp., 10s/6d.) The substance of the opening chapter appeared as an article in RELIGION IN LIFE, Spring, 1951. The bulk of the book devotes brief sections to luminous exposition of thirty significant New Testament texts. It concludes with suggestions for study of the Greek text, and calls for expository sermons preached "with all the joyous passion of one who has discovered an old truth in a new setting."

On our side of the water, Franklin Ferris Russell, who formerly taught Greek at the Protestant Episcopal Theological Seminary in Virginia, Alexandria, Virginia, has compiled a *Review Guide to New Testament Greek*, a fifty-five-page, paper-covered booklet distributed by the Seminary Bookstore. The author produced it especially for candidates for canonical examinations of the Episcopal Church, but it is equally useful for other seminary students in Greek exegesis courses or for pastors who desire to "brush up" their Greek. He has included in small compass helpful material from W. R. Harper's *Introductory New Testament Greek Method* and Bruce M. Metzger's *Lexical Aids*, also special word lists for several of the New Testament books.

Two Friendship Press books call for mention: *Man and God in the City*, by Kenneth D. Miller, and *Under Three Flags*, by Stephen Neill; both \$2.00 (cloth), or \$1.25 (paper). Dr. Miller discusses trenchantly the work that "churches are and are not doing" in urban areas. Bishop Neill writes about India, Pakistan, and Ceylon, where out of 445 million people only eleven million are Christians—who are, in proportion, amazingly influential. He gives the background for India's "neutrality" and remarks that "decisions taken in the next few years in that part of the world will have the gravest significance for North America and the whole of the West."

Readers of RELIGION IN LIFE will remember the article by Margaret K. Henrichsen in Spring 1952, "The Woman Minister." She has now given us the whole appealing story of her ministry to "the stalwart, independent Down-Easters"



in rural Maine, in *Seven Steeples*, Houghton Mifflin Company, \$3.00. As she concludes, "There is no such thing as a small church when it is a church of Jesus Christ."

A series entitled "The Library of Religion" is in process of publication by the Liberal Arts Press, 153 W. 72nd Street, New York City, under the editorship of Herbert W. Schneider and others. These compact paper-covered volumes consist of readings in "the Sacred Scriptures and Basic Writings of the World's Religions, past and present," selected by discerning scholars. The volumes so far published are: I. Buddhism: A Religion of Infinite Compassion, ed. Clarence H. Hamilton; II. Hellenistic Religion: The Age of Syncretism, ed. Frederick C. Grant; III. Judaism: Postbiblical and Talmudic Period, ed. Salo W. Baron and J. L. Blau. Each sells at \$1.75; Vol. III has also a cloth edition at \$3.00.

A new journal was started in January, 1954, called *Journal of Psychotherapy as a Religious Process*, published by the Institute for Rankian Psychoanalysis, 1062 Harvard Boulevard, Dayton 6, Ohio; editor, William Rickel. Volume I is priced at \$1.50, but future volumes (one a year) are \$2.00. Writers include Fritz Kunkel, Elizabeth B. Howes (Jungian), Wilfried Daim (Vienna). The appeal is to "religious" psychotherapists of all schools. Says the editor, "As a minister, I am puzzled that so many of my fellow ministers can take on the philosophy of Freud and the thinking of modern medical psychology and try to make it come to terms with their own spiritual heritage."

E. H. L.

# INDEX—VOLUME XXIII

**A**  
*Arnold*: Biblical Authority in Contemporary Protestantism, 363

**B**  
*Barstow*: Ministering to American Families Overseas, 604  
*Beach*: Issues Between Catholics and Protestants at Mid-Century, discussion, 187  
 Biblical Authority in Contemporary Protestantism: *Arnold*, 363  
*Bowmer*: Early Methodism and the Quakers, 418  
*Brightman*: Professor Brightman's Theory of the Given: *Stahl*, 537  
*Brown, R. M.*: Theological Gamesmanship II, 396  
*Buber*: Martin Buber at Seventy-Five: *Friedman*, 405

**C**  
 Call to the Christian Ministry, The: *Wise*, 59  
*Cameron*: The Little Flowers of John Wesley, 267  
 Can Strong Men Pray?: *Vincent*, 95  
 Character Education à la Mode: *Fitch*, 528  
 Christ the Hope of the World, discussion: *Latourette*, *Niebuhr*, *Stoeffler*, 323  
 Christ's Call to Unity and Mission: *E. Smith*, 256  
 "Compel Them to Come In": *Norwood*, 516  
 Craig: Clarence Tucker Craig, 1895-1953: *Weigle*, 451  
 Credentials of a Cleric, The: *Keck*, 430  
*Crownfield*: Fact, Fiction and Faith, 549

**D**  
 "Dangerous Pentecost, A." selection: *Luccock*, 322  
 Denominations or Union?: *Versteeg*, 352  
*DeWolf*: New Agreements in Theology, 216  
 Douglass: H. Paul Douglass and American Protestantism: *Shippey*, 125

**E**  
 Early Methodism and the Quakers: *Bowmer*, 418  
*Eby*: The Middle Kingdom, 226  
*Ensley*: George A. Gordon, Theologian of the Moral Ideal, 83

**F**  
 Fact, Fiction and Faith: *Crownfield*, 549  
*Ferré*: The Holy Spirit and Methodism Today, 36  
*Fitch*: Character Education à la Mode, 528  
 Folklore of the Berbers: *Wall*, 114  
*Friedman*: Martin Buber at Seventy-Five, 405

**G**  
*Garrison*: The Minister's Reading, Discussion, 488  
*Glover*: The Old Evangelicalism and the New, 286  
 Gordon: George A. Gordon, Theologian of the Moral Ideal: *Ensley*, 83  
*Grimes*: Is Religious Education Obsolete?, 384

**H**  
 H. Paul Douglass and American Protestantism: *Shippey*, 125  
*Harmon*: The Paradox of Christian Leadership, 279  
*Heuss*: "How We Fail God," selection, 162  
 Holy Spirit, The, selection on: *Wesley*, 4  
 Holy Spirit, The, and Methodism Today: *Ferré*, 36  
 "How We Fail God," selection: *Heuss*, 162

**I**  
 Is Religious Education Obsolete?: *Grimes*, 384  
 Issues Between Catholics and Protestants at Mid-Century, discussion: *G. Williams*, *Beach*, *H. R. Niebuhr*, 163

**J**  
*Jeffs*: The Minister's Reading, discussion, 494  
 "Jesus Said": *Sperry*, 375  
 John Wesley and Baptismal Regeneration: *Sanders*, 591

**K**  
*Keck*: The Credentials of a Cleric, 430  
*Kilpack*: Spirit, Son, and Father, discussion, 28  
 King Arthur in Connecticut: *Tuttle*, 234

*Kolbe*: What Is Liberalism?, 556  
*Krumbine*: The Minister's Reading, discussion, 505

**L**  
*Latourette*: Christ the Hope of the World, discussion, 323  
 Little Flowers of John Wesley, The: *Cameron*, 267  
*Luccock*: "A Dangerous Pentecost," selection, 322

**M**  
 Main Types of Existentialism, The: *Schrag*, 103  
 Martin Buber at Seventy-Five: *Friedman*, 405  
*Mead*: Thomas Jefferson's "Fair Experiment," Religious Freedom, 566  
*Meek*: The Revised Version of the Old Testament, 70  
 Middle Kingdom, The: *Eby*, 226  
 Ministering to American Families Overseas: *Barstow*, 604  
 Minister's Reading, The, discussion: *Smith*, *Garrison*, *Jeffs*, *Rowe*, *Krumbine*, 483

**N**  
 New Agreements in Theology: *DeWolf*, 216  
*Niebuhr, H. R.*: Issues Between Catholics and Protestants at Mid-Century, discussion, 199  
*Niebuhr, Rein*: Christ the Hope of the World, discussion, 334  
*Norwood*: "Compel Them to Come In," 516

**O**  
 Old Evangelicalism and the New, The: *Glover*, 286  
 Operation Bootstrap (Indonesia): *Thomas*, 438

**P**  
 Paradox of Christian Leadership, The: *Harmon*, 279  
 Place of Christology in Contemporary Protestantism, The: *Sulsback*, 206  
*Polanyi*: Science and Conscience, 47  
 Professor Brightman's Theory of the Given: *Stahl*, 537

**R**  
 Religion in One World: *Settle*, 243  
 Revised Version of the Old Testament, The: *Meek*, 70  
*Rowe*: The Minister's Reading, discussion, 500

**S**  
*Sanders*: John Wesley and Baptismal Regeneration, 591  
*Schilling*: Spirit, Son, and Father, discussion, 19  
*Schrag*: The Main Types of Existentialism, 103  
 Science and Conscience: *Polanyi*, 47  
 Sectarianism and the Psychoses: *Southard*, 580  
*Settle*: Religion in One World, 243  
*Shippey*: H. Paul Douglass and American Protestantism, 125  
*Smith, E.*: Christ's Call to Unity and Mission, 256  
*Smith, N. G.*: The Minister's Reading, discussion, 483  
*Sochman*: "To Save, Not to Satisfy," selection, 482  
*Southard*: Sectarianism and the Psychoses, 580  
*Sperry*: "Jesus Said," 375  
 Spirit, Son, and Father, discussion: *Van Dusen*, *Schilling*, *Kilpack*, 5  
*Stahl*: Professor Brightman's Theory of the Given, 537  
*Stoeffler*: Christ the Hope of the World, discussion, 341  
*Sulsback*: The Place of Christology in Contemporary Protestantism, 206

**T**  
 Theological Gamesmanship II: *Brown*, 396  
*Thomas*: Operation Bootstrap (Indonesia), 438  
 Thomas Jefferson's "Fair Experiment": *Mead*, 566  
 "To Save, Not to Satisfy," selection: *Sochman*, 482  
*Tuttle*: King Arthur in Connecticut, 234

**V**  
*Van Dusen*: Spirit, Son, and Father, discussion, 5  
*Versteeg*: Denominations or Union?, 352  
*Vincent*: Can Strong Men Pray?, 95

W

- Wall*: Folklore of the Berbers, 114  
*Weigle*: Clarence Tucker Craig, 1895-1953, 451  
*Wesley*: John Wesley and Baptismal Regeneration: *Sanders*, 591

BOOK REVIEWS

A

- Abbott, L.*: *Weigle*: Lyman Abbott, Christian Evolutionist, by Brown, 629  
*Apostles of Discord*, by Roy: *Parlin*, 458  
*Apostolic Succession in the First Two Centuries*, The, by Ehrhardt: *R. Grant*, 627  
*As I Remember (Autobiography)*, by Goodspeed: *F. C. Grant*, 309  
*Aubrey*: The Transformation of the Scientific World View, by Heim, 622

B

- Bertocci*: Christian Realism and Political Problems, by Niebuhr, 299  
*Biblical Faith and Christian Freedom*, by Lewis: *J. N. Thomas*, 143  
*Birth of Christianity*, The, by Goguel: *Metzger*, 615  
*Bosley*: Mandate to Humanity, by Potest, 317  
*Bowman*: The Fulness of Time, by Marsh, 460

C

- Cailliet*: Christianity and Existentialism, by Spier, 152  
*Cannon, J.*: That the World May Know, by Ranson; *Missions Under the Cross*, ed. by Goodall, 149  
*Christian Approach to Culture*, The, by Cailliet: *Packer*, 618  
*Christian Doctrine of Creation and Redemption*, The, by Brunner: *Greene*, 138  
*Christian Faith and Communist Faith*, ed. by MacKinnon: *Latourette*, 302  
*Christian Faith and Natural Science*, by Heim: *Flewelling*, 314  
*Christian Hope and the Second Coming*, The, by Minear: *Wilder*, 612  
*Christian Realism and Political Problems*, by Niebuhr: *Bertocci*, 299  
*Christian Vocation*, by Forrester: *Wall*, 156  
*Christian Worship*, by Hedley: *Harkness*, 614  
*Christianity and Existentialism*, by Spier: *Cailliet*, 152  
*Christianity, Diplomacy and War*, by Butterfield: *Harbison*, 469  
*Church and Mental Health*, The, ed. by Maves: *Johnson*, 319  
*Church and Social Responsibility*, The, ed. by Spann: *Worley*, 476  
*Clark*: The Gospel of the Spirit, by Colwell & Titus; *The Gospel Before Mark*, by Parker, 312  
*Communion With God in the New Testament*, by George: *Rollins*, 633  
*Conscience and Compromise*, by Long: *Cragg*, 468  
*Cragg*: Conscience and Compromise, by Long, 468  
*Crane*: Spiritual Problems in Contemporary Literature, ed. by Hopper, 136  
*Cranston*: Religion as Salvation, by Rall, 145

D

- Dillenberger*: In This Name, by Welch, 624

E

- Early Christian Fathers*, ed. by Richardson (Lib. Chr. Cl. Vol. 1): *Lazzaro*, 307

F

- Faith and Culture*, by Meland: *Kroner*, 478  
*Filson*: The Names of Jesus, by Taylor, 154  
*Flewelling*: Christian Faith and Natural Science, by Heim, 314  
*Forbush*: The Man in Leather Breaches, by Noble, 627  
*Fox, George*: *Forbush*: The Man in Leather Breaches, by Noble, 627  
*Fulness of Time*, The, by Marsh: *Bowman*, 460

G

- Galilean Way*, The, by Ingalls: *Lantero*, 621

- Wesley*: Selection on the Holy Spirit, 4  
*What Is Liberalism?*: *Kolbe*, 556  
*Williams, G.*: Issues Between Catholics and Protestants at Mid-Century, discussion, 163  
*Wise*: The Call to the Christian Ministry, 59

H

- Harbison*: Christianity, Diplomacy and War, by Butterfield, 469  
*Harkness*: Christian Worship, by Hedley, 614  
*Harmon*: That Immortal Sea, by Weatherhead, 479  
*His Word Was With Power*, by Saunderson: *Hough*, 155  
*History of Christianity*, A, by Latourette: *H. V. White*, 134  
*History of the Ecumenical Movement 1517-1948*, A, by Rouse & Neill: *Snyder*, 633  
*Horton, W.*: New Testament Pattern, by Leuba, 625  
*Hough*: His Word Was With Power, by Saunderson, 155  
*Household of God*, The, by Newbigin: *Leiper*, 316  
*Hugh Latimer*, by Darby: *Norwood*, 474  
*Hunted Heretic*, by Bainton: *Norwood*, 474

I

- In This Name*, by Welch: *Dillenberger*, 624  
*Interpretation of the Fourth Gospel*, The, by Dodd: *Purdy*, 464  
*Introduction to Religion*, by King: *McCasland*, 631

J

- Jesus and the Future*, by Beasley-Murray: *Wilder*, 612  
*Johnson*: The Church and Mental Health, ed. by Maves, 319

K

- Kingdom of God*, The, by Bright: *Scott, R. B. Y.*, 311  
*Kroner*: Faith and Culture, by Meland, 478

L

- Lantero*: The Galilean Way, by Ingalls, 621  
*Latimer*: Hugh Latimer, by Darby: *Norwood*, 474  
*Latourette*: Christian Faith and Communist Faith, ed. by MacKinnon, 302  
*Lazzaro*: Early Christian Fathers, ed. by Richardson; *Zwingli and Bullinger*, ed. by Bromiley (Vols. I, XIV, Lib. Chr. Cl.), 307  
*Leiper*: The Household of God, by Newbigin, 316  
*Lyman Abbott*, Christian Evolutionist, by Brown: *Weigle*, 629

M

- Man in Leather Breaches*, The, by Noble: *Forbush*, 627  
*Mandate to Humanity*, by Potest: *Bosley*, 317  
*McArthur*: Peter, by Cullmann, 462  
*McCasland*: Introduction to Religion, by King, 631  
*McCulloh*: A Theology of the Living Church, by DeWolf, 466  
*McNeill*: Ways of Faith, by Hutchinson and Martin, 150  
*Metzger*: The Birth of Christianity, by Goguel, 615  
*Missions Under the Cross*, ed. by Goodall: *J. Cannon*, 149

N

- Names of Jesus*, The, by Taylor: *Filson*, 154  
*New Testament Pattern*, by Leuba: *W. Horton*, 625

- Niebuhr, U.*: Sex Ethics and the Kinsey Reports, by Hiltner, 472  
*Northrop*: War, Communism and World Religions, by Braden, 297  
*Norwood*: Hunted Heretic, by Bainton; Hugh Latimer, by Darby, 474
- O
- Outler*: Psychology of Pastoral Care, by Johnson, 470
- P
- Packer*: The Christian Approach to Culture, by Cailliet, 618  
*Parlin*: Apostles of Discord, by Roy, 458  
*Penner*: The Unfinished Reformation, by Morrison, 147  
*Peter*, by Cullmann; *McArthur*, 462  
*Psychology of Pastoral Care*, by Johnson: *Outler*, 470  
*Purdy*: The Interpretation of the Fourth Gospel, by Dodd, 464
- R
- Religion and Economic Responsibility, by Muelder: *Gloyn*, 141  
 Religion as Salvation, by Rall: *Cranston*, 145, *Schilling*, 146  
*Rollins*: Communion With God in the New Testament, by George, 633
- S
- Sacraments in Methodism, The, by Goodloe: *Schilling*, 634  
*Schilling*: Religion as Salvation, by Rall, 146; The Sacraments in Methodism, by Goodloe, 634  
*Scott, R. B. Y.*: The Kingdom of God, by Bright, 311  
*Servetus*: Hunted Heretic, by Bainton; *Norwood*, 474  
 Sex Ethics and the Kinsey Reports, by Hiltner: *U. Niebuhr*, 472  
*Sittler*: God Hidden and Revealed, by Dillenberger, 477
- Snyder: A History of the Ecumenical Movement 1517-1948, by Rouse & Neill, 633  
 Spiritual Problems in Contemporary Literature, ed. by Hopper: *Crane*, 136
- T
- That Immortal Sea, by Weatherhead: *Harmon*, 479  
 That the World May Know, by Ranson: *J. Cannon*, 149  
 Theology of the Living Church, A, by DeWolf: *McCulloh*, 466  
*Thomas, J. N.*: The Biblical Faith and Christian Freedom, by Lewis, 143  
 Transformation of the Scientific World View, by Heim: *Aubrey*, 622
- U
- Unfinished Reformation, The, by Morrison: *Penner*, 147
- W
- Wall: Christian Vocation, by Forrester, 156  
 War, Communism and World Religions, by Braden: *Northrop*, 297  
 Ways of Faith, by Hutchinson and Martin: *McNeill*, 150  
*Weigle*: Lyman Abbott, Christian Evolutionist, by Brown, 629  
*White, H. V.*: A History of Christianity, by Latourette, 134  
*Wilder*: The Christian Hope and the Second Coming, by Minear: Jesus and the Future, by Beasley-Murray, 612  
*Wolf*: The Great Tradition of the American churches, by Hudson, 304  
*Worley*: The Church and Social Responsibility, ed. by Spann, 476
- Z
- Zwingli and Bullinger, ed. by Bromiley (Lib. Chr. Cl. Vol. XIV): *Lazzaro*, 307

## BOOK NOTICES

- A
- Addison*, War, Peace, and the Christian Mind, 158  
*Augustine*, Earlier Writings (Burligh, Lib. Chr. Cl., Vol. VI), 320
- B
- Bainton*, They Built for Eternity (Gedat), 320  
*Barth*, Against the Steam, 480  
*Boegner*, The Prayer of the Church Universal, 637  
*Bonnell*, The Practice and Power of Prayer, 636
- C
- Cameron*, The Rise of Methodism: A Source Book, 636  
*Casserley*, Graceful Reason, 636  
 Christian Hope, The, and the Task of the Church (World Council of Churches), 636  
*Coffin*, A Half Century of Union Theological Seminary, 1896-1945, 636  
*Cross Currents*, magazine, 320
- D
- Deane*, The World Christ Knew, 480  
*Dicks & Kepler*, And Peace at the Last, 159  
*Dix*, Jew and Greek: Study in the Primitive Church, 636  
*Doniger*, ed., Sex and Religion Today, 159
- E
- Eby*, The God in You, 480  
 Eschatology (Scottish Journal of Theology, Occasional Studies), 159
- F
- Ferris*, The Story of Jesus, 158
- G
- Henrichsen*, Seven Steeples, 637  
*Greenslade*, Schism in the Early Church, 160
- H
- Humphrey*, God and Company, 158
- J
- Journal of Psychotherapy as a Religious Process*, 637
- K
- Kean*, Christian Gospel and the Parish Church, 159
- Kennedy, A Reader's Notebook, 480  
*Klemme*, The Bible and the Common Life, 159
- L
- Latourette*, The Christian World Mission in Our Day, 636  
 Library of Religion Series (Hamilton, Grant, Baron & Blau), 637  
*Loetscher*, The Broadening Church, 637
- M
- Meland*, Higher Education and the Human Spirit, 480  
*Melish*, Strength for Struggle, 320  
*Miller*, Man and God in the City, 636  
*Moore*, Immortal Tidings in Mortal Hands, 158
- N
- Neill*, Under Three Flags, 636  
*Nelson*, ed., Work and Vocation, 636  
*Niles*, Preaching the Gospel of the Resurrection, 636
- P
- Pendle Hill Pamphlets* 1952-53, 320  
*Phillips*, Making Men Whole, 159  
*Phillips*, Your God Is Too Small, 159
- R
- Russell*, Review Guide to New Testament Greek, 637
- S
- Schisler*, Christian Teaching in the Churches, 637  
*Sperry*, Sermons Preached at Harvard, 480  
*Spinka*, ed., Advocates of Reform (Lib. Chr. Cl., Vol. XIV), 320
- T
- Taylor*, A Sober Faith, 158  
*Thurman*, Meditations of the Heart, 480  
*Tillich*, Love, Power and Justice, 480
- W
- Waugh*, The Preacher and His Greek Testament, 637
- Y
- Young People's Religious Bookshelf announcement (Pastoral Psychology), 480

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